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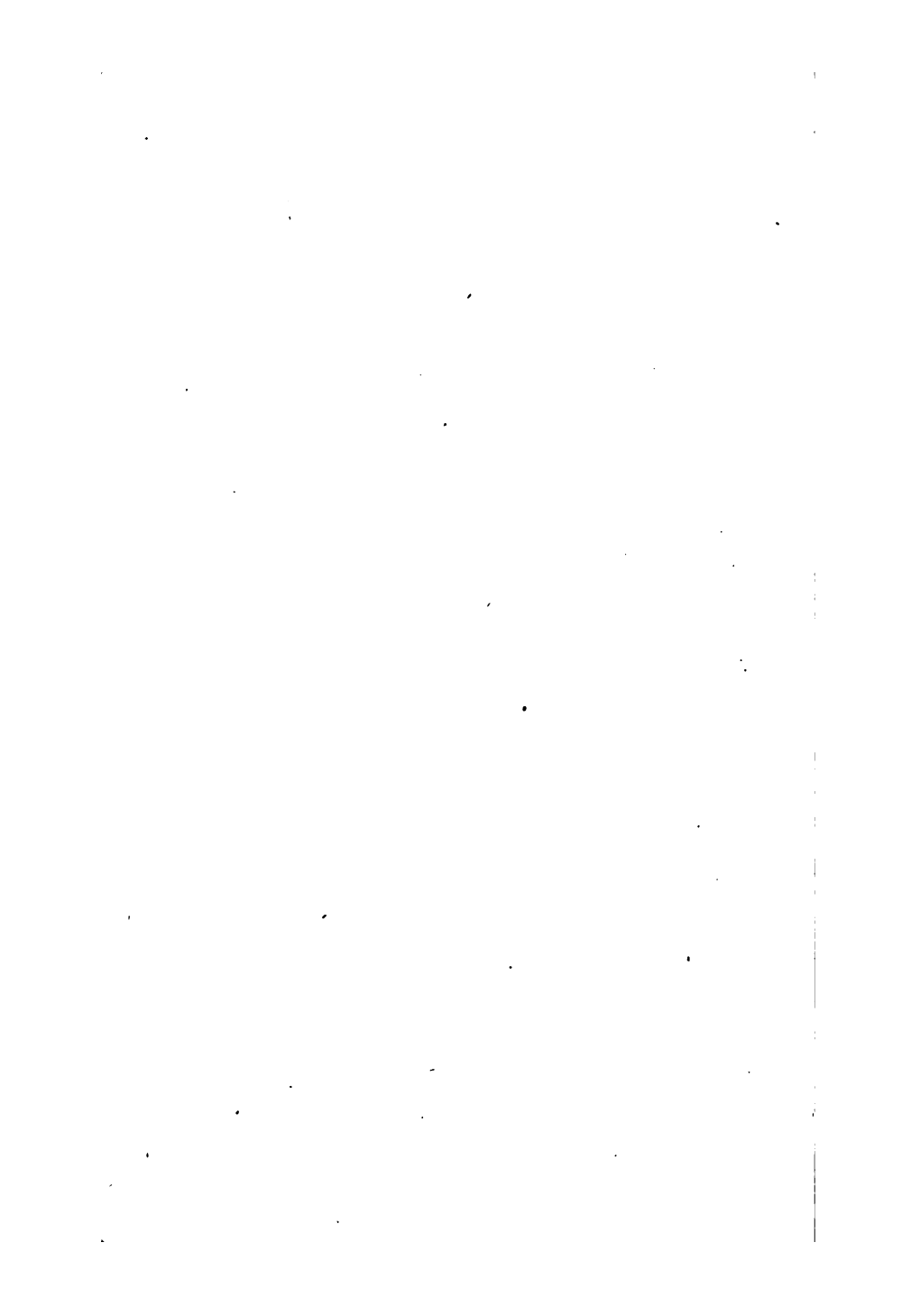
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## CRITICISMS.



# CRITICISMS.

BY

JOHN W. LESTER,

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"The world of nature, on which but now I gazed with wonder and admiration, sinks before me. With all its abounding life and order and bounteous increase, it is but the curtain which hides one infinitely more perfect,—the germ from which that other shall develop itself. My faith pierces through this veil, and broods over and animates this germ. It sees, indeed, nothing distinctly; but it expects more than it can conceive, more than it will ever be able to conceive, until time shall be no more."—Fichte.



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1847.





DEDICATED  
TO  
THE REV. J. WRIGHT,  
VICAR OF MALVERN,  
ETC. ETC.  
WITH THE HIGHEST SENTIMENTS  
OF  
RESPECT AND GRATITUDE,  
BY  
THE AUTHOR.



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## PREFACE.

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THERE is a time when the soft, dreamlike glory of our being is to be foregone, and those scenes of exquisite beauty, and those hymns of mellowed sweetness which thrilled us in the world of intellectual loveliness, are to be forgotten in the renewed energies of the spirit, and the deeper feelings of the heart. And ere we pass these enchanting memories by, we cannot choose but linger for awhile over the names and histories of those whose divine harmonies have thus given a more significant meaning to the ever-blessing creation around.

We have to thank poet and painter, and architect and sculptor. We have oftentimes, indeed, thought we could discern the golden light of heaven radiating and beautifying their works; and sometimes, too, have caught notes of a higher import than they at first expressed. There has been a strange beauty, as if the fairest gleam had fallen from the better land. And they

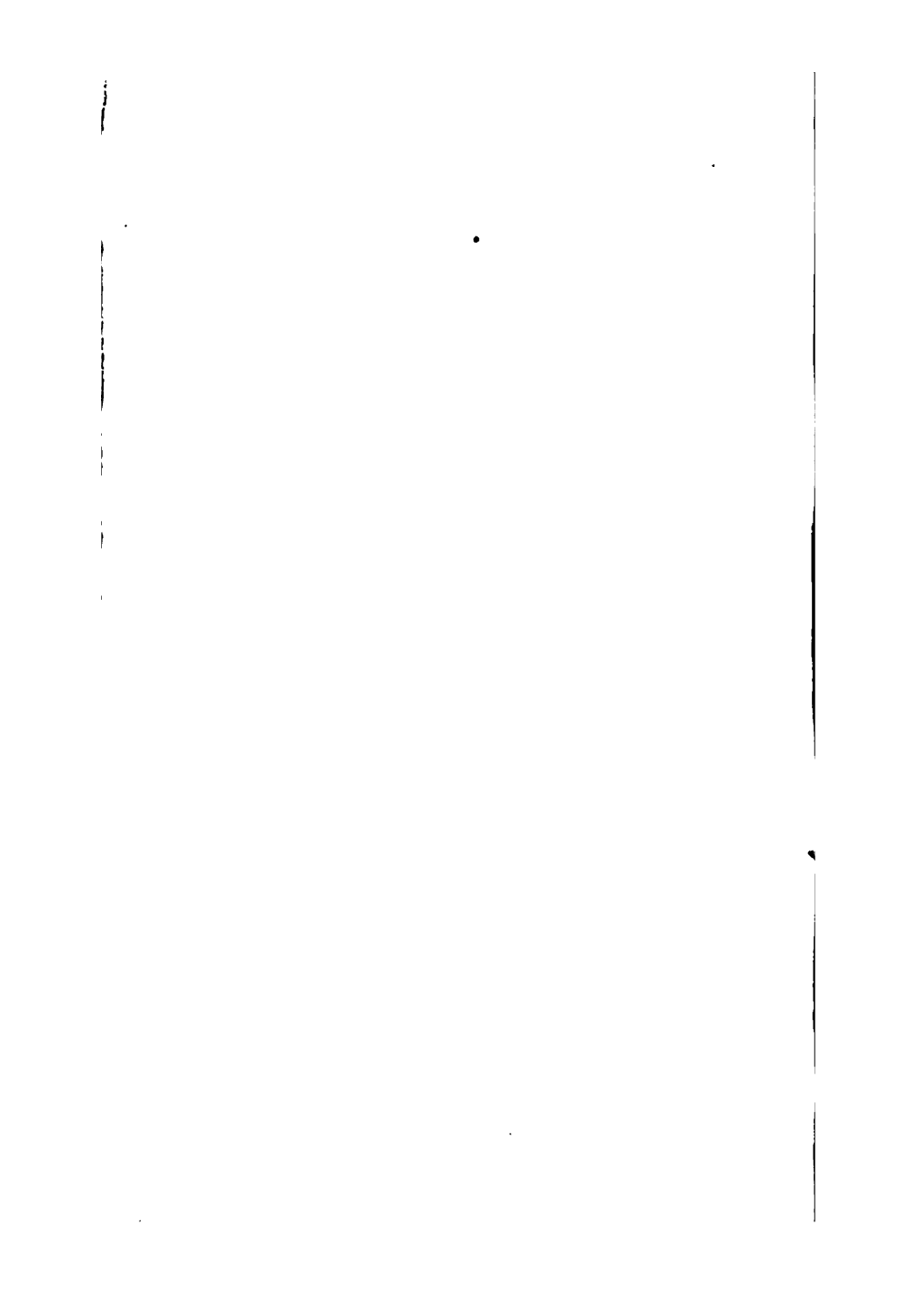
have taught us to look on nature as a precious thing; as the embodiment of the Divine idea; as the symbol of the Everlasting One.

Their names are gathered up in the following volume, either by allusion or by direct criticism. But there are two we would fain speak of here—the magnificent Trench, and the colossal Carlyle; one of whom reminds us of some gigantic river, now winding its course gently from its limpid spring through sunny meadows covered with the luxuriance of summer, and now sweeping in its more majestic course by the eternal bases of towering mountains, snow-diademed; now baring its bosom to the boundless heavens, and reflecting in its roll of rushing waters the myriad stars, and now heaving, and swelling, and surging onwards to the desolate ocean; sometimes dark and dim with pines and firs, and sometimes bright with the light of the blue empyrean: the other, of some tremendous being struggling with mighty power, now standing amid thick darkness, and now beneath the sublime radiance of universal sunlight; now gazing on the soft witchery of an evening twilight, and now piercing into the blackest scenes of the French Revolution; now immersed in loftiest speculations, and now sparkling and beaming with a world's regeneration. A spirit thanks them both—throbs out its fervid gratitude!

The time of which we spoke is only in remembrance, and this volume is the only memento. We now have higher aims than the mere expression of literary sentiments; these trifling sweets we leave for conflict with the prince of darkness; there is now a sterner work to do. We have plucked a few flowers, sunbeamed, while on our way to the temple of the Holiest, and ever and anon has come a wish that they might be preserved. May the desire be realized!

On those publications issued before our sixteenth year, we write "Plagiarisms." Would that it had been otherwise!





## POLLOK.

"Poets are the hierophants of an unapprehended inspiration; the mirrors of the gigantic shadows which futurity casts upon the present; the words which express what they understand not; the trumpets which sing to battle, and feel not what they inspire; the influence which is moved not, but moves. Poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the world."—SHELLEY.

A FRIDAY, on the 19th October, now some fifty years back,—Glasgow, as ever, smoky dull; the citizens begin to stir—ships unload—all bustle, all confusion: the world's wealth is being poured into its close-packed warehouses. Now and then, a true soul passes who can see beauty in the fine old cathedral, and who, perhaps, mourns for its almost forgotten anthem. Not a sound there; no liquid melody; no voice of prayer each day: cold and silent is that massive pile.

The day seems no otherwise than yesterday—all goes on the same—the din and hurry of business alone heard. A strange face here and there, perchance; but the rest we know them well—anxious, plodding men, crowding onwards. The artizan gazed upwards as he walked to his accustomed toil, and deemed it a fresh and beautiful morn; the student looks out from the college window in High-street, and yearns for his simple kirk and homely manse among the distant hills.

A few miles off, and to-day is not as yesterday. An autumnal sky spreads itself over Moorhouse; that only is the same. Ben Lomond and Ben Ledi look solitary and sublime from the distance: their summits encircled with mists: God's huge altars once, "when holy were the haunted forest boughs, holy the air, the water, and the fire," and the sacrificial flame flared upwards to the gigantic heavens, and the priestly Druid ministered. The sun just lightens up the glens and dark tarns; the moor is swept over by the October winds—a wild, deep sweep. Sweep, sweep on: there is hope in yonder cottage. The wife, about to become again a mother, wishes the curtain drawn aside, that the golden beams may tremble in. Light in the chamber, and hope, we said.

A boy is born. That family all unknown; he will not rest so. There will be strange faces; the face of the Southern and the face of the free. That day has changed it. There is sanctity now on mountain, moor, and glen. The child will become a fearless, lion-hearted man. To-night, the stars will twinkle as usual—all silent, all still; but on earth the first moments of a young immortal will be passing away.

That boy—for of the boy we speak—early manifested a love for the wide-spread heavens and the "God-sown world." Amid the sublime solitudes of his native home, his sympathies linked themselves with creation's ever-changing aspect. The gloomy darkness of the lowering storm, and the sullen magnificence of sunset, quickened the manly breathing of his soul. The radiant softness of summer deepened the feeling of awe-wrapt emotion; morning and evening came, and rolled their harmonies on the ear; the golden clouds, as they

floated in the pure blue sky, were significant of the earth's glory and the earth's decay; nor did the sweet tints of the wild heather minister in vain.

The hour when Pollok first looked on the boundless universe of God, and felt its divine influences, was an hour as full of grandeur and wild sublimity as when the persecuted Loyola stood before the vicar-general of Alcala, and, lifting up his "calm, devout countenance," said, "I did not think that to preach Christ was a novelty among you." Then did the high resolve and manly purpose come; and there were listenings to its deep witching melodies: he was enamoured with its exquisite sweetness. No wonder this. There were whisperings of affection: assignations made. This orb was one gigantic altar raised to the might and goodness of the Holiest One; he its priest; he longed to sacrifice: from it he desired to send upwards the pæan of an immortal; he would hymn it to the skies; he felt the fevered impulse to burst forth into one tremendous acclaim.

Song is ever the highest worship. It has in it something of heaven; it is imperishable, inextinguishable; ever swelling, ever rolling, ever surging with more than oceanic music. Withal, it utters silvery and liquid and tender tones, when he who sang moulders in the grave, with the moon and stars above forgetful of him. The poet's heart lived in his verse; this was enough. Now fade, earth and beauty; he was content—the anthem could live. The fine, full, majestic minstrelsy of ancient bards swept by; he listened; he grew entranced; his soul heaved, panted, dilated; it throbbed as if it would throb everlastingly. He vowed to strike the melodious and undying harp; then around him gathered

the scenes of infancy and the dreams of youth; and there were hymnings, holy and divine. The spell was spoken; he bowed his head and worshipped. Reader, thou shalt hear the prophetic utterances: twenty-seven years of mysterious teaching, and the voice will break into being, and sing his dark, still thoughts.

The voice, what deep, wild power it hath! Issuing from some secluded corner, how hath it often shaped and moulded the chaotic mass of the world! Syllables have shaken, ever and anon, the wide-spread earth. The voice of One, scorned by rank, trilling from out Judea, threw beauty over man's hopes, and gave grandeur to his faith; and the voice, swelling onwards from the "mountain-cinctured retreat" of the Monk of Cluny, bound Christendom under one terrible rule; and it required another voice, bursting forth from the quiet convent of St. Augustine, some centuries after, to break the iron despotism, and give man back his freedom. The voice, those trembling but fervid utterances of the heart, oh, they make and unmake, they bind and unbind, they enshrine the spirit in all divine purity, and they sink it to those "abysmal depths" where the soul, once finding itself, wanders in the agony of despair!

This youth saw the realities of things; he was a true spirit; he seized hold of vital principles. All truth is vital; principles could not exist without it: truth must be at bottom, or else they could have no being. Every religion, whether the national belief of civilized or uncivilized kingdoms, is not wholly void of truth, else it could not thrive; wither and perish it must. Were it a lie, a chimera, it could not become a people's faith;

that is impossible. Some fine, sublime verity exists in each.

One elephantine empire, and the soul's transmigration is the creed: great doctrines here. Strip it of all semblance; lay it bare; peel off its outward falsities and meretricious ornaments, what have we? These glorious truths:—The spirit's distinct and separate existence; its immortal nature; future rewards and punishments. Realities these! Here is the life—the living source; otherwise, the huge nation would have broken the spell long ago.

Nearly all systems teach the atonement in some way or another; dim and mystified it may be; that we question not. The gods must be appeased, and appeased, too, with man's most precious possessions. This world's lost condition and offended Deity recognised here! Wondrous this! Humanity, in its most fallen, most abject state, still has some belief in the sublime doctrine of the redemption. Weak and shadowy it may be, when compared with the pure and unsullied faith of Christians; but ah, it is far from a semblance even with them! It is no fantasy; it is reality.

Mahomet—true prophet: had he been false, credence would have been withheld. No marvel this. This great, wild, strong-hearted man, brought up among grovelling idol-worshippers, without light, without even a glimmer, arises, and spreads abroad the holiest of verities. This quick-eyed Arab, surrounded by nought save wooden gods, comes forth and preaches celestial doctrines! Had he been false, he would not have been heard—no man would have listened; nay, he himself would not have believed them. The deep

epic roll of the blue-twinkling, silver-glancing stars was reality; he beheld it; he gazed on the idols; they made that spangled firmament? Never; they were semblances. Hence he rejected, despised, overturned them. He clung to the true: God is one; God made all things. The divine music of the infinite universe gave him knowledge, trained and disciplined him; with nature he communed spiritually; he learnt reality.

Islam—there is one God; he is great; we must be resigned to him; all he sends us, whether joy or grief, life or death, is good; in his presence is the highest, holiest heaven: realities these! They reached men's hearts: had they been semblances, the first puny breath would have scattered them in a thousand directions. They were truth; hence their existence now.

The soul which worships some rude rock, some fine, outspreading tree, some star twinkling ever brightly in the blue immensity, holds truth; else he would not so worship. In that upturned eye, and that bended knee, and that low, solemn voice, there is fact recognised; belief in a superior Being; in the Supreme. It matters not by what name he calls his god, the doctrine remains the same; it is still reality; a diviner Influence, a diviner Power is acknowledged.

The Epicurean doctrine is not without truth; it had one of the aims of Christianity at heart; and dimly, one of its glorious revelations.

One evening, a fine majestic form was seen leaning on the bosom of an Asiatic maiden; ever and anon, he gazed upwards into her deep blue eye; then again hid his face in her soft bosom. The twilight was calm and quiet; there was no sound, save when some bird flew by to its nest; the sun threw its crimson and

golden colourings on the dark forest which stretched far away in the distance; the gnats had ceased their busy play; the gazelle had gone to rest; the sound of the swelling river seemed to deepen the silence. Then came a gentle gust of wind; the leaves, and the grass, and the wild wood-flower trembled; then all was peace again. Still, still, all stillness. The young Oriental gazed upon the features of his beloved, and she returned the gaze; their love was sweeter than the witchery of that hour. They embraced, and rose, and parted; she to her rude hut beside yon towering cedar on which the sun now glances, and he onwards to the mountains. He looked up, and uttered the fulness of his heart; his soul was as light and as bright as Vesper's beautiful star. He leapt, he ran, and as he passed, every tree and every bush seemed greener, in the gladness of his breast: he lived over the hallowed endearment, and "sought through nature for similitudes." He loved with all the spirit's affection, and she whom he loved was true and good. His eye caught glimpses of the moon just rising above his own dim mountains, and he thought of heaven. What was it?—where could it be?—might it not be in that soft, silvery crescent? That there was some flowery, odoriferous region beyond the grave, he knew for certainty, for his father had taught him so. The inexpressible bliss he had just felt was something more than mortal: could it belong to the land above? Ah, then it passed over his mind that heaven would be the blessed abode of connubial love: so he thought. He uttered it; he gave it birth; it was clothed in words, and it glanced on the new creation; the Eastern lovers repeated it to each other; it was their feeling, it became their faith. Heaven consisted in love; ah!



was there no truth here? Strange that it should be the symbol of our own creed.

Man must ever have some being on whom to rely; some gigantic power on which to depend; some fair haven of repose in which to take refuge; some Divinity to whom he may go and supplicate for assistance; some bright, smiling Deity to whom he can pour out his gratitude; some shrine at which to offer his praises; some altar whereon to burn incense; some glorious and everlasting Supreme, who can sanction his vows of unchanging affection and determination of good; some mighty, stupendous, majestic One, on whom to lean for ever. Man's thoughts must be hallowed; he feels it; and the splendid cathedral rises with its magnificent architecture to the soft blue skies, alike with the simple but beautiful village church. Even the banner, ere it floats over the troops of a nation, must be consecrated.

The dark, leer-eyed Atheism has something of reality; it has a God—it is denominated Chance. This men worship. Fatal and blind as it is, it is yet a power. "Who made all that?" once asked the world's Scourge, when pointing upwards to the mighty heaven. Chance! Did they say that it came together under no influence, never a heart would believe. It is ever thus. Soul-weakening, soul-degrading, soul-damning as is this impious faith, yet does it set up some divinity,—amid all the jargon, and unmeaning logic, and hollow argument, and hoarse denials, do we find them bending lowly at a shrine, and reverencing humbly a deity.

We have found some reality in all these; semblance, however, has darkened it. The naked, bare reality is ever mighty in its effect; semblance alone nullifies. We cling to forms—vague, dim, unsubstantial

forms; and hence we are so often perverse and crooked in our ways, and often stray from the fold far out into deserts and silent wastes, where no wild flower ever grows: hence idolatries, and all their absurdities and unhallowed rites. The soul must dwell on reality to be healthy. It is true that semblances are received more fully and freely than reality, and hence our feverish and sickly state.

Man, in his savage condition, has fact to deal with. There is reality in the ever-burning stars—in the rocks—in the high-peaked mountains—in the shady dells—in the wide, outstretched forests—in the beautiful flowers—in the ocean—in the sun streaking its waters with a gloomy grandeur—in Heaven's eloquent murmurings—in all the sights and sounds of nature—in the prattle of his babe—in its glancing eye—in its free and unbounded liberty—in the affection and tenderness of his wife—in the parental care—in all and every form of manhood. The wild heart feels it to be so: hence his soul strengthens, progresses, expands, stretches itself far upwards to the gigantic roll of being, and far downwards to the immeasurable sweep of existence.

Christendom possesses reality—a reality sublimer than the wide grandeur of infinitude, and more magnificently vast than the universe itself. It is a solemn and a strange verity—it is divested of all semblance—it has no shadowings of the unsubstantial—it stands alone, majestic and immense; on an imperishable basis it is fixed. Man and the Throne is grasped; the two are indissolubly linked; the finite and the infinite dwell in each other: there it is—a real, mighty, tremendous fact. In itself it is simple—so simple that a

babe may understand; ay! and babes have understood. No sophistry can overturn it; it remains firm as the mountain crest, around which the clouds roll in vain; nay, firmer. With everlasting vigour, it enfolds the world—the lower and the upper world; there it stands, a mysterious reality; ere long, and it will command the universal gaze and the universal admiration. What otherwise was the scene enacted on Calvary's cross?

True semblances have been thrown around this holy verity, but in itself it has sustained no injury; they have glided away as the shadow of a wood, when the sun ascends the zenith. Are the stars less real, because the sightless man may deny their existence? There they roll, as rolled they ever, in silvery beauty. Are the attributes of the Almighty less real, because dark, foul-mouthed Atheism has in its senseless blasphemy set up in the temple of God a monstrous Deity? shine they not with as great an effulgency in the sweet loveliness of creation, and in his own divine government, and in his own unutterable love, as ever? What injury have they sustained? There they stand, in naked and sublime reality; they cannot be shaken. The world may shout in the madness of its sceptical folly, but shout it must in vain: the tangible cannot be moved, the substantial cannot be weakened; He exists still, He must exist for ever. Semblance may be hooted far away to some lonely isle, but this never: shadows may be dispersed as the morning vapours, but this never: He remains as firm, and as strong, and as lasting, and as gigantic, and as infinite as when the earth was without an inhabitant, and itself shapeless and formless. Shake Omnipotence? Try! The attempt

will fail, and be flung off as the spray of the dashing wave is flung off from the sea-rock; flung back into its own watery element.

Men are injured by semblance, never by reality: reality raises them, lifts them up to the highest happiness; semblance fells them, sinks them down to the lowest misery. All semblance—all lie: all reality—all truth. God is the greatest reality, and therefore the altogether good; Satan is the greatest semblance, and hence the altogether evil. You can trust one for all things—for heaven and earth, and fail he shall not: you dare not hope in the other for a single boon.

Romanism was semblance when the heroic Luther assailed it. He bared his breast; it was heart work: he grasped reality, and with it he dispelled the dismal shades: he stood on fact—justified by faith: a sublime verity. This he flung in among the groping nations, and the darkness became day. It went sooner than the gossamer before the whirlwind—more quickly than the leaf before the tempest blast. The people gazed and discerned the way of eternal life: the film fell from their eyes: they hurled from them the unreal!

Truth in Romanism? Yes, there is truth. That hurts none; rather gives life; but its semblances are mistaken for reality, and hence the church is apostate; her ministers teach the shadowy; they lean on tradition and the fathers—dim, dull, foggy twilight, not the perfect day: hence they mislead. The Scriptures are a reality: these they shut up. Given, as they are, to the heart of man, to guide his steps heavenwards, to elevate his intellectual and moral nature, to draw out his infant faculties, to renew his fallen spirit,

and to change it into more than pristine beauty, this they seal with traditions and the fathers: hence darkness and the road to darkness.

Reality wants no fanciful adornings, it needs no semblances; its naked substance is alone suited to the purification of the human soul; the healthy, vigorous fact; no ornament, no sentimentalism; it requires none. In itself it is godlike; what amendments, then, from decayed manhood!

"God is a Spirit, and they who worship him must worship him in Spirit and in truth,"—a reality. It needs no semblance of consecrated church, and apostolic succession, and episcopally ordained minister; these are outward symbols. If Jehovah is present, the place, though a way-side hut, is consecrate—a reality: if the speaker is a child of God, though but a simple peasant, he is legitimately ordained and legitimately a successor of the apostles—a reality. Away with semblance!—the worship of the Eternal must be from the heart; it is the heart which consecrates, the heart which ordains.

We once heard an unlearned and unlettered labouring man preach; he knew neither classical nor mathematical lore; not versed he in subtle divinity; on him no episcopal hands had ever been placed; yet there he stood and preached, with the Spirit's power, Christ crucified: the presence, the influence, the blessing of heaven was there. It is a fact which no sophistry, no argumentation can overturn; there it is—a plain, lasting truth; nothing can shake our faith in it—it is impossible; it has been tried, but without success. Ah, men far more learned, and far more intellectual, than this poor but holy man, have hurled

against it all their logic and all their denunciations; but it remains still unmoved, undisturbed, rivetted for ever.

Forms may indeed be well if there is the reality signified, but without, what are they? Rome's ministers are episcopally ordained; do they preach truth? What, then, of laying on of hands, if the hallowed purpose, and the holy resolve, and the deep spirit's utterance be not there? It is the heart, the reality, that is essential, not the semblance; the semblance without the reality is impotent, the heart without the semblance may be resistless.

This is an age of semblances: shame that it should be so! Phantoms are seen everywhere—they flit about both in the world and in the church: in the latter we hear of apostolic succession, monkish celibacy, consecrated piles, saintly merits. Away with the damnable lies! Merits, indeed?—what merits? The church teach the doctrines of man's merit!—monstrous! The great, stupendous, gigantic reality forgotten—the one perfect, unsullied, infinite atonement. What mean they by our merits, forsooth?—where are they?—can they be found?—do they exist? We marvel greatly at hearing fallen creatures talk thus, who are every day groaning under iniquity and sin. Angelic hierarchies may whisper of merits, not we. Hence with the fantasy! Tell of our demerits, and our deep ingratitude, and our frequent wanderings, and our often waverings, and our dark rebellions, and here were reality, here were something substantial.

Men enter the church because they are adepts in secular learning and worldly wisdom, and then prate about apostolic succession and such like. We must

have something better than mere prating: he who is moved and stirred up by the Eternal, and who is breathed over by the Spirit, wants no semblance. Away with the idol! Truly it hath many worshippers. The preacher of the Cross, he is the legitimate descendant of Paul and John, Polycarp and Cyprian: none others are, be they episcopally ordained or episcopally consecrated. Without this, they are no ministers, and have no power. Classical and mathematical erudition, what avail these for the dying wants of humanity—mere semblances—mere shadows! The ambassador of Jesus must have heaven's credential written in his life and conduct; others are delusive, counterfeit, base. He must be spiritually-minded, and ever must his soul rise upwards to the Everlasting in supplications and thanksgivings; his heart's deepest affections must be linked to the throne; the sunshine of the happy clime must beam on his countenance; he must teach the poor, humble, and repentant sinner that there is mercy and forgiveness. Sacrilege to send any youth into the holy enclosure because he can stand well on the Honour List! Is this all? "Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?" And these men would enchain the creature's right of private judgment; they would be the rulers of slaves. Strange infatuation! Give us the love and homage of one free, independent spirit, or none at all,—the affections of men for us, not that of unthinking beings. Darken the intellect, shackle the thought, shadow the soul, that we may be obeyed: madness this! Fling the accursed semblance from you!

He who imprisons the human will is man's direst

foe; he who seeks to subjugate the hearts of his parishioners to the teaching of the church, and to that alone, is their darkest enemy; his own puny mind may deem it glorious, but we deem it inglorious: he violates humanity's most sacred right, he defiles humanity's most inestimable inheritance. Enormous the guilt, infinite the sin! Moral sway may be desired, but this, instead of leaving men divested of strength, makes them the freer to think, and the freer to do. What! break the spirit, that we may rule?—curb the intellectual soul, that we may reign?—enchain the thought, that we may be obeyed?—do this, that we may be servilely fawned and servilely flattered? Detestable, diabolical pride!—away with the foul desire! Christianity came to give freedom to the slave, “to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound;” it came to restore the children of earth from every debasing enthrallment and every debasing bondage.

We are told that order will be preserved and happiness increased, if we submit our wills to the episcopally ordained ministers. Order!—yes, the order of brute beasts, who submit because they have no soul; yes, the order of fallen, base-born intelligence; the order of spirits, tied, and bound, and crushed beneath superstition's darkest rule. And happiness increased! yes, there may be happiness—slaves are sometimes happy; the dog is happy; but shall we compare it with the happiness of a free and thinking being? Avaunt with the thought! Destroy the fine faculties of our fellow-mortals, and then call them to render us adulation and flattery? No crouching for us! Which is better, which is sweeter, the affection of a spaniel, or the affec-



tion of a majestic human spirit?—which is better, which is sweeter, the forced sacrifice of a slave, or the sacrifice of a divine and fearless intelligence, who was free to choose and free to act?

He who values not the freedom of man's intellectual and moral powers, inflicts the greatest curse on himself and brotherhood. And will a man enter, dare to enter the church, that beneath her holy and hallowed shelter he may stab the heart, and become a kind of enshrined deity?—a deity of hell, not a deity of heaven! Beware! Semblance will dissolve; shadows pass away; chimera vanish. We have no anathemas sufficiently heavy to invoke on this crime. Eclipse the sun, darken the stars, dash the universe to an everlasting chaos, it were not so dark a sin as the enchaining the thoughts of one immortal spirit.

How can the church flourish, if men thus defile her altars? Time for us to see to it, else we may expect the torpedo's touch, or the iron nights of Norway. The Bible is the resplendent reality; "out of it are the issues of life;" it wants no semblance of note and comment for the salvation of the soul; it is sufficient of itself; it is God's reality; "the wayfaring man, though a fool, shall not err therein." Man may teach this, and no more. What have we to do with bowings and turnings to the east, and waxen candles, and surplices, and all such semblances of piety and saintly breeding? Shall these darken the bright countenance of the Christian? "The good old man," it is somewhere beautifully said, "bears on his forehead shadowed glimpses of the coming heaven." Shall these be dimmed? Unsubstantials—disperse, dispel them!

otherwise man's faith will become a semblance, and man's belief a fleeting cloud.

Much of our present music is mere semblancy; it wants reality; there is no master-tone; no stirring energy; no all-absorbing harmony; no mighty and thrilling key-note. Trash; not so manly as the lisping of a babe. We had rather that, it were reality: better than these whining, puling compositions. Exceptions there are; rightly so, else all were lifeless. They are much, too, in the same manner, all copyists; hear one, and you hear all; they produce vague and shadowy emotions, idle as a day's dream—idler; that may be reality—mere jargon, stringing together of notes without meaning; the voice without the spirit, soulless. Instead of plain and simple strains, we have quaverings and semi-quaverings; our old masters must be annotated and improved, arranged anew for these modern productions; as if the fine roll of Handel's minstrelsy, and the magnificent outbreak of Beethoven's choruses could be deepened; they are like the storm, tempest-sounding and tempest-dashing. As if a child could add to Milton. Vain, puny, mad attempt! We must have dexterity, sleight of hand, legerity. Instead of majestic melody, we have simpering and sickly love-songs: very sentimental, truly! Better rude notes than this; better the hymn of the savage to his God; it were more powerful, more divine.

As Mahomet, among idolators, seized hold of verities, so likewise did Pollok in a feverish age. Both were heroic men. The one, immersed in darkness, with nothing but the blue heavens above, and the wide-spread desert at his feet, and the remembered words of Sergius, the Nestorian monk, heard in his fifteenth year,

pierced through the gross superstition by which he was begirt, and grasped reality; the other, brought up, indeed, under the hallowed light of Christianity, yet encircled by ten thousand devotees at the shrine of polluted intellect, arose, and casting aside the dogmas of a sinful world, worshipped the Everlasting and the Invisible.

Under such training, the soul of Pollok waxed strong; he exhibited signs of great ability; his spirit, endowed with genius, had caught the inspiration of the throne; it clave to the Eternal. Paradise, with its chaste joys, and this nether world, with its bowers of bliss, opened on his gaze; his taste became assimilated to that of angels; he revelled amid scenes of perfect and unalloyed beauty. The sunlight of heaven glanced on the unruffled calm of the flowery landscape; he was enchanted, enthralled, and yet free. Life was happiness. He looked upwards upon the starry skies, and his heart beat high: he looked downwards on the earth, with its towering mountains, and green vales, and moss-crowned banks, and multitude of waters, and felt the divinity of poetry. Then came the voice of fame. He paused; was thrilled; longed to be renowned.

Thus stood his mind, when round him came a cloud.  
Slowly and heavily it came, a cloud  
Of ills we mention not; enough to say,  
'Twas cold, and dead, impenetrable gloom.  
He saw its dark approach, and saw his hopes,  
One after one, put out, as nearer still  
It drew his soul; but fainted not at first,  
Fainted not soon. He knew the lot of man  
Was trouble, and prepared to bear the worst;  
Endure whate'er should come, without a sigh  
Endure, and drink, even to the very dregs,  
The bitterest cup that Time could measure out;  
And, having done, look up, and ask for more.

He called Philosophy, and with his heart  
 Reasoned. He called Religion, too, but called  
 Reluctantly, and therefore was not heard.  
 Ashamed to be o'ermatched by earthly woes,  
 He sought, and sought with eye that dimmed apace,  
 To find some avenue to light, some place  
 On which to rest a hope; but sought in vain,  
 Darker and darker still the darkness grew.  
 At length he sunk; and Disappointment stood  
 His only comforter, and mournfully  
 Told all was passed. His interest in life,  
 In being, ceased; and now he seemed to feel,  
 And shuddered as he felt, his powers of mind  
 Decaying in the spring-time of his day.  
 The vigorous weak became; the clear, obscure;  
 Memory gave up her charge; decision reeled;  
 And from her flight Fancy returned, returned  
 Because she found no nourishment abroad.  
 The blue heavens withered; and the moon and sun,  
 And all the stars, and the green earth, and morn  
 And evening withered; and the eyes, and smiles,  
 And faces of all men and women, withered,  
 Withered to him; and all the universe,  
 Like something which had been, appeared, but now  
 Was dead, and mouldering fast away. He tried  
 No more to hope, wished to forget his vow,  
 Wished to forget his harp; then ceased to wish.  
 That was his last; enjoyment now was done.  
 He had no hope, no wish, and scarce a fear.  
 Of being sensible, and sensible  
 Of loss, he as some atom seemed, which God  
 Had made superfluously, and needed not  
 To build creation with; but back again  
 To nothing threw, and left it in the void,  
 With everlasting sense that once it was.  
 Oh! who can tell what days, what nights he spent,  
 Of tideless, waveless, sailless, shoreless woe!  
 And who can tell how many, glorious once,  
 To others and themselves of promise full,  
 Conducted to this pass of human thought,  
 This wilderness of intellectual death,  
 Wasted, and pined, and vanished from the earth,  
 Leaving no vestige of memorial there!

There are times, indeed, when light is in the heavens  
 and glory streams from every object,—times, when the

heart is not afraid, when it feels assured that the whole hemisphere will be as one living sapphire, brighter than the waters of the sea. In those moments, we fear not; we feel that there is that within, which, by God's grace, shall burn for ever. Sweet, delicious hope!—would that it might last! Yet no; the soul must struggle, else where would be the increase of its strength?—the spirit must pass the night, all solitary and alone, beneath the ebon ceiling, cheered only by the flickering glare of the beacon-fire, ere the beautiful dawn is seen gilding the mountain-tops, and shedding its opal loveliness into the plains below. Ah, one seems, in certain seasons, like some Titanic being struggling with huge masses of blackness, and thick, palpable clouds; but then comes the pure, still ether of eternity, and the calm, unruffled quietude of serene repose.

This cannot continue long. Time's shadows, and time's clouds, and time's anxieties, want some master-vision to light them into beauty. We get entangled, and then cast down; the whole existence seems enwrapped in strange, unearthly darkness. Would that it might discern the day!—but, alas, no! we must toil, toil on, trying to hew down some huge mountain that outshuts the clear, silvery heavens, and there is the sound of hammer and of axe, but no sound of joy, and no success but the success of despair; for the vast mount uprises in its immensity, and we toil, toil on, all-lonely and all-weeping. Ah, it is a mysterious pass for the soul to be brought to—a dim, dark state, like "the valley of the shadow of death." We dare not hope, for it would be mockery; we dare not wish, for it would be blasphemy: we are desireless now, yet ever and anon we hear the songs, so liquid and so

sweet, on the further side of this mountain, and ever and anon comes the soft chime of blessedness and the realization of all beauty, and we look up, and again toil, toil on. Thus the spirit struggles onwards, till the break of universal day, and the hymn of universal love, and the smile of universal peace, and the glory of universal happiness burst upon the entranced soul!

Poets are never more interesting than when portraying their own feelings; they then warble with more than dulcet melody. Our quotation is one of Pollok's finest descriptions; and exhibits, too, many of his peculiarities: how touching its every note! The struggles and sorrows of great men obtain a ready and willing audience. How beautifully the sainted Cowper tells of his trials!—none more exquisite than those lines of his on the receipt of his mother's picture; they are beyond praise. How sad the music, and yet how delicious!—it is like angels' language; it is like the soft, silvery minstrelsy of the rolling stars, or the vesper chime—a low chant of spiritual sounds—a murmur, sweeter than that of early dawn or dewy eve.

And how enchanting are Bowles' reminiscences of childhood and youth!—they flow gently as a placid stream; there is a low, still sound, delicious as an evening hymn or a golden dream. The hum of bee!—ah, it is not so mellifluous! We return to the scenes of our own infancy, and we thank the poet for telling us his own feelings and his own thoughts, for they have awakened ours. Reader, cling to this "isle of beauty," amid the strange, jarring, bursting confusion of this world; it will heal thee and soothe thee. And is not this worth your love? Hast thou ever seen a bird sitting on a sweet green branch, with its wings all

wetted by the shower, singing so softly in the sunshine? Ah, he forgets the storm, or if he remembers, it is but to gild the beams of loveliness which have broken forth from yonder cloud with a more charming grace. So thou, bathe ever in the thoughts of bygone years; recal those gushing affections, as fresh and as pure and as bright as a spring morning, which outgushed from thy heart in those quiet days. Thou wast happy then; be happy now! Forlorn and desolate art thou; then lift thine eyes above; a land of tenderness is there, and of the spirit's holiest play. No, it is not a meagre, void, and empty clime, but the orange-tree grows, and the majestic cedar, and beneath its fair and far-branching trees stretches the home of open-hearted and faithful love. Its intelligences love; they love, they love. Ah, no more separations! no more farewell kisses and tearful embraces; no more deep, bursting sobs; no more stifled agony; no more gazing on the receding land until its dark and dim coast sinks away into the surrounding night!—ah, no more farewells, but bright, sunny, rapturous joy! Wilt thou gain that “isle of beauty”?—worship the meek and gentle Jesus; deeper and richer glory shall break on thy soul, and melody. Thou hast, perchance, stood by the side of thine Own, in some evening's hallowed twilight, and she hath sung thee a song of the better land, and its music hath thrilled thy being; even such shall the song be, but far more delicious: and thou shalt meet thy parents, and thy children, and all whom thou hast loved; and in the calm sunset of heaven shalt thou recal the days of infancy and youth, and pointing to this beauteous earth, rolling along the azure expanse, shalt thine heart throb with unspeakable bliss,—that bliss shall be holy, holy, holy!

And those exquisite, soft strains of Cowper and Bowles shall come warbling on the air, and fill it with sweetness: never wilt thou forget; thou canst not,—memory lives; its golden light radiates for ever. Seest thou that gentle flower, uprearing its lovely petals to the morning breath?—so shalt thou be looking upwards, and drawing thy life, thy happiness from the Invisible. Love Christ; the divinity shines in him; the sounds of ocean and the whisperings of tender affection issue from his lips. Behold thyself, and live! He is thy brother, kinsman, God! Live, live; and thou shalt scent the odoriferous flowers of Paradise, with angels and thine own beloved ones!

Our poet despairs. Heaven opens, and “God passes by in mercy:” henceforth his energies are directed to the Supreme; they are consecrated to creation’s Lord; the cloud rolls for ever away; the faces of friend and kindred grow beautiful again. The skies, the stars, speak more eloquently; the sun and moon gleam yet with a brighter lustre; the earth glistens in the early dawn—the green and many-tinctured earth. His mind is renewed; the Spirit of the living Jehovah sprinkles it with the waters of regeneration; he bows himself at the throne; he determines to minister in the temple. The Divinity, enshrouded as it is in a sublime glory, becomes his study: he opens the book sent down to mortals; Nature told much—Revelation more. One was a faint, uncertain, glimmering light; the other, the full, refulgent day.

Great men win their way through inward and outward struggles—great struggles, no fantasies; mighty wrestlings—no semblances. To many, these strivings may seem as mere shadows—mere ideal fancies. The



spiritual soul—call you its longings after heaven, its deep self-abasement, its temptations, its triumphs, its leaning helpless on Christ, its pantings after purity, its sorrows, its trials, its darkness, its sunlights, its depressions, its hopes, its faith,—call you these unmeaning, unsubstantial things?—have they no existence, because they are hidden from the gaze? And are the workings in the breast of the intellectual being less real, less true?

But these are deemed visionary. Are they who deem them such, men themselves? If not, why dare they give judgment on things beyond their reach of comprehension and their farthest ken? The gigantic struggles, the intense woes, the creations beautiful and bright, the melody like “some snow-light cadences melting to silence, when upon the breeze some holy bark lets fall an anthem sweet to cheer itself to Delphi,” the magnificent burst of song, the immortal stirrings, the everlasting aspirations, the profound bliss, the man sinking into all soul, the divine influx, the breaking in of revelations, the sky with her myriad stars breathing her sylph-like tones, the silence of deserts and lofty mountains—more exquisite than the subtle witchery of an evening hymn, the undefined thrill of delicious emotions trembling through the whole being, a sort of rich, throbbing, musical feeling, as if the entire existence were one heart, the dilating and enkindling and burning spirit, the quenchless love of excellence, the basking in the empyrean, the more than laving in the clearest streams—oh, what know they of these? Visionary, indeed, to them. Perhaps, taken up with some gilded volume, as children are with tinselled gingerbread, they forget the true end of all existence.

Absorbed in the vortex of seeming honours, how should they think like imperishable creatures? The object of life becomes a bauble; and worse, they themselves become the bauble. Oh, was our nature given for this?—born and cherished and brought up were we for this? With powers and faculties worthy of their Creator, and able to grasp the most ethereal principles, are they to be cast around a poor, paltry book with elegant binding? Is this our destiny?—this the aim of our being?

Men sink themselves into the mere machine; the mere mathematicalism; the mere classicalism,—all semblances; walking shadows; useless automaton! They go in the heyday of youth to the university; prizes dazzle with their unnatural glare; they become beautifully bound volumes; scholarships; fellowships—semblances all. Instead of taking possession of the honour, they let the honour take possession of them; they merge into the distinction. Senseless this! Scholarships, when they should be energetic men; fellowships, when they should be daring and majestic spirits! Better be sellers of violets in the huge metropolis; it would throw some gleams of golden sunshine on the moving mass of humanity, and tell of the light green meadows and the fair creation of the Everlasting. Go, go, sell violets; it were better, it were more useful, more like God's work, than putrefying in cloistered halls! There are exceptions—splendid exceptions. Quite needful that there should be. We see the book with its neatly-tooled morocco binding, and its college arms, and its snow-white paper, and its beautiful letter-press, but we look in vain for the man. We want practical men, not books. Plenty of golden

medals and walking scholars, yes, and slow-paced fellowships already, without our wishing more!

Prizes may be useful, if we are not absorbed by them; under right principle, they may elevate our moral nature; under false, they will lower it; their influence depends entirely on the ruling passion of the soul; they can be made the elixir of life, or the poison of death. If they are sought for their own sakes, as tending to imparadise and exalt self, then they assuredly will weaken and enfeeble and narrow the intellect. But, verily, among these moving semblances there are many gods; but where is the free, independent man?—where is aught else save the mere bauble, inanimate and inactive?

Learning, without a ruling soul, is but as the rude block of marble in the hands of a child; he will carve, and mutilate, and disfigure, but he will neither impart beauty nor grace. The mass is there, but where is the fine ethereal spirit of the sculptor to breathe it into life and loveliness? Men of learning, if they have no thinking heart, are no more than this block: we see its huge size and firm material, and wonder that there is no hand to give it form and vitality.

Man is not to be absorbed in any pursuit; the pursuit must be absorbed in him. How often do we behold the pursuit; but no man! Ought this to be? Shall poetry and science take possession of the gigantic soul, and that soul become poetry and science?—had the mother her birth-hour for this? No; it sprang into existence the legitimate sovereign of creation, and of all its varied and sublime creed: he is lifeless who sinks into a pursuit, however high and however splendid;

he is then but as some fine semblance—some magnificent shadow. Man should be himself: he is placed here, a reasonable being, with the universe at command; he is not to become a leaf, flower, star; but the leaf, flower, star are to become his; they are his by birth-right; he is the presiding spirit; he has power to shape and mould their every form and every feature; they must obey his will; they are his own, and ever are they open to his use. Shall he sink, then, into the mere semblance?

Our love of natural and intellectual beauty must be an attribute, an element, not the whole man. We may be enthusiastic in our love and admiration of these, but we err greatly if we let them govern us: the spirit should be above all, able to control, able to direct: it was created a monarch. What, then, is it worth, if liable to be carried captive? It should itself carry captive. Natural and intellectual excellence must merge into it, and not it into them: idolatry and death to become passive qualities.

But some men sink into more unworthy things: they, too, are transformed into their idol: all the incense that ought to burn in Jehovah's temple is breathed out at the silent shrine. Man: a jewelled ring; a jewelled brooch; a scented handkerchief, and a thousand other trifles—Is this the towering human soul?—this that spirit for which the gay earth and the eloquent heavens were created?—this that immortal essence for which the Deity veiled himself, and shadowed the glory of his throne?—a diamond plaything, a snow-white web! And yet it is even so; we see it daily. Man loves to be anything rather than himself. Ah, when will he awaken to his true position?

Man is man, and not a bauble. Lower himself to that he too often does, and then sneers at the thoughts of one who dares to be himself Scoff and deride on! better that than lying passive and inactive. Scoff and deride on! With one foot on earth, and the other on the threshold of heaven, and with every star rolling between, we proclaim man sublimer than the universe in its more exquisite beauty, and most dread magnificence.

Pollok now enters the university: it is the year 1817. Arise, O sun! and shine; a gigantic soul is passing through the court-yard of the Glasgow Alumni—once again a true man treads her pavement. Now little known, little cared for, but by the home of infancy: ah, reader, he bears a father's and a mother's blessing. His eyes are softened into tears: the world is all before him. But that solitary spirit will become one of Scotia's noblest sons; he will be rugged Caledonia's pride, therefore arise, O sun! and shine. He mixes among its members; he gazes on each countenance, he marks it; it is his own for ever. One no doubt thinks how he was disappointed. As Luther went to Rome, so does Pollok come to the Alma Mater. He fancies that he will find an assemblage of fine, aspiring spirits. Alas, no!—hallowed associations, and hallowed feelings, and hallowed principles, are little regarded. He sits one evening alone in his room; the sun is sinking in the horizon; gloomy clouds, and as magnificent as gloomy, are rolling onwards to the western sky; the steps of humanity become less and less frequent; the din of the city is hushed into a sweet, strange sound; he arises and looks out of the window; his large eye flashes; all his fancies, and vows, and assignations throng back; they give life, vitality, energy, throb-

blings, inextinguishable thoughts again. Ah, he had wept, as he sadly imagined, over their cold remains. But they exist: yea, he feels strong in the knowledge that all at Eaglesham are talking of Robert: with the parental blessing, he dare hope. Hope on, fond youth; thou shalt not hope in vain! He forgets the unkind remarks of students and tutors; he is once more the heroic soul. There is something tangible, something worth living for in the universe.

But loneliness is felt most on the Sabbath. He paces by the Canongate after the solemn services of the quiet day, and there is an agonizing solitariness within his soul; he paces onwards—homewards, we were going to say—would that it were so!—but to his cold rooms. There are no smiling faces to greet him, no warm and tender welcome, no converse of love, no artless chat of children—all is chilly, all is dismal. He passes many a blessed home, and beholds through the window the happy family gathered around the blazing hearth, and his thoughts wander to his own cottage upon the distant moor. How sweet it were to be on that far-off spot once again, and gaze upwards on its mantling heavens. So he wishes; but there must be work and stern denial now. Thus, college-life is oftentimes one dark scene in the spirit's toil: so Milton and Jeremy Taylor found it.

One morning, and this Pollok is seen strolling towards Lochgoin: it is situated on a beautiful part of Ayrshire. He rambles on, his spirit thinking deeply of the Covenanters. This house was once their haunt; during the persecution of 1660, hither they retired. Strange that men should be hunted like beasts of prey because they choose to offer heart-worship to the

Lord! Twelve times did their foes search every room—in vain: Providence took care of those who forgot not the lily's lesson. His steps are tending hitherwards; his dreams are of those ancient men—his sympathies are linked with their holy cause—he already is amongst them. It is a calm, soft-like hour; no breeze is stirring—no leaf trembles. A vast assemblage stands listening to the legate of the Eternal. There he is: the fine, clear sky, and the quiet dell, and the luxuriant foliage, and the jagged rocks, and the heather, and the blue-bell, and the wild flowers, complements of himself. The scene is in perfect keeping: in Christ's fair creation, Christ's fair name is sounded. A hymn arises: it is the martyrs': it is rolled upwards to the open heavens: its echo comes back in gentle murmurings. A signal sounds; the multitude has fled.

With many a scene of this description playing before his fancy, he reaches the hallowed building: he enters. The flag carried aloft at the battle of Bothwell-bridge, Captain Paton's sword, the Bible which he gave to Mrs. Paton on the scaffold, rivet his attention; they are engirt with a thousand expressions, deep-toned, of liberty and manly bearing. The poet catches the divine sounds; the light of freedom glances from his eye.

Often would he stroll thither, and as often did he return invigorated and strengthened. Visions of old beamed on his spirit, not to enervate, but to brace and elevate. Whilst attending the various courses of appointed studies, did he drink in the rich, mellifluous strains of Britain's highest bards; he heard the mighty swellings of their harps; he listened to their liquid cooings, and their everlasting thunderings. The paper

which he read at this time before a literary society is redolent with poetic beauty.

Pollok's college life is at last ended. He had "scarcely signalized himself at all. How could he, whose thoughts were already consecrated to the Course of Time? He was no great prizeman; none of those who effloresce early, and die away soon; who mortgage the chance of immortality for a gilded book; who leave college loaded with laurels, and are never heard of more. For this he was at once too modest and too proud." He enters the Divinity Hall; he studies full well divine theology; not man's theology, but God's. At the end of his twenty-fourth year, he stands up with his first discourse: inattention is marked on nearly every countenance. "By one man's disobedience many were made sinners!" The tremendous assertion falls unheeded. A true soul, he speaks poetically: his hearers at once fix on him their gaze: he proceeds; smiles are seen; laughter is heard: he moves not; goes on undisturbed. The insult provokes not yet the fire of his lips; he enumerates the blessings consequent on Adam's obedience: the scoffs continue: he changes his position, and utters, with a look of stern indignation, "Had sin not entered our world, no idiot smile would have gathered on the face of folly to put out of countenance the man of worth!" It is a note of the Course of Time's deep music.

Some ten or eleven months after this, we find Pollok giving an address on preaching to a small society of friends. The poet is easily distinguished throughout the whole. The conclusion is beautiful:—"While we would have the preacher to be plain and simple in language, always to preach Christ and him



crucified, never to lose sight of the great atonement, and the truths connected with it, we would have him to give a tongue to the sun and the moon, and every star of heaven, to speak forth our Saviour's praise,—we would have him to bring forth the beasts of the forest and cast them down to do homage at the cross of Christ,—we would have him command the ocean to be silent and listen to the still small voice of the gospel,—we would have him make the four winds messengers of the word of God,—we would have him make the mountain bow down to the footsteps of the Redeemer, and the valley rise up and meet his goings,—we would have him teach the oak and the plane to spread their shelter, and the sweetbriar and hawthorn to breathe their incense in the lowly course of the meek and humble Jesus,—we would have him teach every flower of the field—the violet, the rose, and the lily—to adorn the garden of Gethsemane; make the ravens of heaven bring an offering to the Holy One; and instruct the lark and the nightingale, and every daughter of heavenly song, to lift up, with man, hosannahs to Him who came from the right hand of the Ancient of days, to bind up the broken-hearted, and to comfort all that mourn.”

The latter part of 1824 realized Pollok's ruling desire. He then found a fitting theme for a great poem. Heaven gave him music; he struck the harp's strings, and heard its melody; he felt confident of success: his eye kindled with enthusiasm; his whole soul poured itself forth in song. It was a glorious, a divine hour. Each note, as it died away, served only to enshrine the Deity within; earth, sea, and sky rolled their treasures at his feet; they adorned his verse; but to them his

spirit gave additional brilliancy and splendour. Now he sang for immortality; he knew his strains would live: his presentiment was true—no false prophet he. Cease from touching the vibrating chords he could not; it became his very life—his very existence; his being was wrapt up in their intonations; they yielded him joy, delight—all that the soul deems happiness. The sedate student gave full freedom to the glowing impulses that swept over his heart; henceforth he was no longer confined in a room; its four walls sank away; creation—the bright and magnificent creation stood around: there was infinite range; no prison-airs heard he. He was quickened: Inspiration and Revelation descended; he bathed his forehead in the pearly light of Paradise. He became thought—lovely and everlasting thought. And Eternity came: it unfolded sublimer realities and more solemn beauty. There was a deeper quietude—a holier hush. Ages poured along; were scrolled backwards; still unruffled infinitude before, unruffled infinitude behind. He beheld the verdant plains of heaven; he tasted their unfading sweets; the dew, when it fell, fell in music; the flowers, as they breathed upwards, breathed silver melody. He saw angels; hierarchy above hierarchy, towering in grandeur, with brows resplendent as the rainbow; and the anthem issued; the past visioned itself; time's events gathered their sounds into his song. Nor was the earth forgotten: it stood, blushing as Vesper, amid its sunny hopes, and hallowed peace, and tender whisperings, and rapturous glances, and deep, inexpressible bliss, and constancy, and truth, and dulcet harmonies.

Our poet thus writes to his brother—the letter is

dated January 8th, 1825:—"Before the new year, I had about three weeks of glorious study. Soaring into the pure ether of eternity, and linking my thoughts to the everlasting throne, I felt the healthy breezes of immortality revive my intellectual nerves, and found a point, unshaken and unthreatened by the rockings and stormings of this world. Blank-verse, the language of assembled gods, the language of eternity, was the form into which my thoughts fell. Some of them, I trust, shall outlive me in this world; and nothing, I hope, shall make me ashamed to meet them in the next. Thoughts, acquirements, appendages of any kind, that cannot be carried with us out of time into the help and solace of eternity, but must be left, the unredeemed and unredeemable of death, are little worth harbouring about us. It is the everlastingness of a thing that gives it weight and importance; and surely it is not impossible, even now, to have thoughts and ideas that may be transported over the vale of death, and not be refused the stamp and signature of the Eternal King. No doubt, the clearest eye must unscale when it comes in view of the uncreated light; and the purest earthly thought must wash itself before it enters into the holy of holies on high; but there are different eyes from those which have never tried to see, and there are different thoughts from those which must be exiled for ever beyond the confines of purity."

And his brother responded with the heart's warmth. He cheered him amid his many difficulties; and perhaps we had never heard the solemn music of the poet's harp had it not been for David's faithful love. His letter, dated from Auchindinny, May 25, 1826, is one of the

noblest in the English language. Humanity owes him eternal gratitude.

On the 24th of March, 1827, the song fell on the public ear: the "Course of Time" was issued; it excited marked attention; it roused every thinking mind; it stamped once and for ever greatness on the genius of its author. He was placed along with kindred spirits; he stood in the temple of fame; his strain rolled onwards—it was immortal. The poet saw and heard, and his heart was grateful. His wish—his morning wish was accomplished: he came into being for this. His work was done; his labour at an end; the laurel-wreath of everlasting emerald graced his manly brow.

On Thursday, the 3rd of May, he preached his first sermon: it commanded great interest. His appearance was solemn; his countenance altogether unearthly; long study had given him an ashy paleness; but the fire of his eyes remained. He sacrificed in Jehovah's presence. Thrice afterwards he ministered: then came illness: he waxed feeble; health gradually forsook him. He thought Italy's calm and Italy's balmy air might recruit his wasted strength; he prepared to leave his fatherland; and on the 15th of August he bade an adieu, an everlasting adieu, to its hallowed coast. On his arrival at Southampton, he took up his residence, until he could depart for the golden southern sky; but sickness increased; his nights were restless; death was on the wing; it soon entered. In Christ he trusted, hoped, and confided: he felt that all was safety and security there. Its sting was therefore harmless; its venom, nectar. On the 18th of September he breathed his last on earth—a mighty spirit fell!

There is something peculiarly touching in all this. Just emerged from obscurity into refulgent day—taken with sickness—leaves his own fine country—endures the pangs of death far from kinsmen and friends—one sister only present. We almost think that it would have been sweeter to have died surrounded by his own hills, and beside his own kindred; and yet perhaps it was more merciful as it was. The bitter agony of separation was over. He had bidden farewell to all he loved; he had done with sublunary things; he was in a more immediate communion with the Everlasting; that Power walked with him through death's dark and cheerless valley.

Two days afterwards, his mortal remains were entombed in the churchyard of Millbrook. They lie not far from the sea-shore; a spot suitable for a poet; the waves, softened by distance, murmur a dirge-like melody. In a land of strangers he lies, far off from his kindred and the home of his love. Over the grave stands an obelisk of granite, bearing, with the dates of his birth and death, this inscription: "The grave of Robert Pollok, A.M., author of the 'Course of Time:' his immortal poem is his monument. Erected by admirers of his genius."

Some may deem his death premature; but what if a man accomplishes the work of a long life ere he reaches his highest manhood?—what if he compresses the feelings, and experience, and labours of fourscore years into twenty-eight?—call we death then premature? The story of his life gives a deeper interest to his song; to strike the lyre with a master's hand was his ruling, sovereign, imperial passion; from his infancy this was his one great object. He passed his fingers over the

strings, and the hymn issued; that hymn is immortal: his work was done: the vows and assignations of his youth were kept—his soul's desire was reaped. He had written an everlasting remembrance: what more could avail him on earth? Nothing. His labour was performed—his hope realized; he had climbed nearly to the summit of Parnassus; only a few above him: he had plucked the laurel—its leaf unfading: what more? He had tasted every joy, and every sorrow of this lower region; he had lived and known all the witcheries of creation, and all the diviner witcheries of thought; he had traced the golden links of that chain which binds the universe to its God; he had seen the lovely form, that excelleth, and drank in the delicious warblings of the highest heaven: what more? Quaffed he not the cup of life? what more to complete his knowledge?—what but Paradise itself, and its mild morning sunlight? He was ripened for this; his harp's chords were strung for the sweeter and holier worship of the skies; its tones became more melodiously wild and beautiful. Why, then, call we it premature? True, he departed from this earth; but entered he not a better and brighter? He had attained to all its science and all its lore; he had communed with the mighty, the great, the gigantic—ah, and he had been with Jesus, and the Sanctifier had descended: he looked up at Vesper, twinkling ever brightly in evening's shadowy hemisphere, and lo, it was the work of His fingers: he gazed on the golden corn-field, "ripe already to harvest," as the wind swept over it, and beheld in its waving sunshine the goodness of Him who listened to the cry of the raven. Illustrations of His Providence teemed everywhere: he felt that he was cared for and loved

by the Deity; he viewed all the actions and all the concerns of time in the light of revelation; he ascended daily in the scale of moral worth; he approached nearer the throne; he arrived closer to the empurpled empyrean. His heart—his brave and sincere heart—clothed in the unsullied purity of the Anointed, awaited the summons to enter the world of spirits. What wonder, then, if the angels came?—what marvel if he winged his flight with them to the fair city of eternity?

The "Course of Time" is a magnificent monument of the author's genius; it abounds in splendid passages; it teems with descriptions which, for pathos and sweetness, grandeur and sublimity, have rarely been surpassed. He has, indeed, none of the luscious beauty of Keats, nor the fine finish of Campbell, nor the oriental gorgeousness of Croly, nor the rich classical melody of Tennyson, nor the gigantic wildness of Edward Irving; his paintings remind one often of Nat Lee. He has, too, much of the dark gloom and powerful energy of Blair, but his lines are not so firm or compact; his style is peculiarly his own. Instead of light effusions, the youthful bard pours forth the secrets of the invisible world; he breaks down the partition wall which men have raised to shut out the daylight of that land; he shadows forth the miseries of hell; he opens up the glories of heaven; and around these he has entwined the flowers and the weeds of earth.

Many of his speculations have been pronounced rash and daring. We cannot agree with such criticism. They may, indeed, appear such to those who deem that the eternal world is still enshrouded in darkness; but they are the thoughts of those who, casting aside

old prejudices, look only on the page of revelation. We are so accustomed, from our very childhood, to hear heaven spoken of as a place devoid of all materialism, that it is long ere we can overcome the notion. Our perceptions are dim and vague; we cannot think of the future with anything approaching to a boundless delight. We have no bold, rugged outlines; we anticipate it not as "a land flowing with milk and honey;" as a land of cedars and pines; a land of the rose and sweetbriar; a land of all beautiful and lovely things. Ah, no hawthorn with its delicious scent is there, no grassy meads, no purling brooks; these we quit for ever, when we take our farewell of this lower world. We conceive not that there may be a creation far more majestic, and sunsets far more magnificent, and a clime fairer and more salubrious, and skies bluer and deeper, and waters clearer and more limpid, and flowers of richer form and more golden tints, and mountains higher and mightier, and enthroned in a more awe-inspiring sublimity. No: we have nothing to lay hold of; nothing tangible; nothing substantial. We hasten to some shadowy unknown; and, unless the mind bursts this galling bondage and thinks for itself, we bury our existence in more than Egyptian darkness and Egyptian obscurity.

Pollak thought for himself: no faint-hearted soul he. But he had a guide—a divine Being. He trusted not in his own strength; nor did he lean on man's: he examined the Oracles with the Spirit's teaching: he found therein full and frequent descriptions of the blessed world: he clung to them: they were reality. It might have been that the whole of Christendom was ranged against him; but Christendom's greatest sons



were forsaken for the Holiest and Undivided existence. Rightly so! False men cling to high names, and hide themselves behind these semblances; but this Pollok was not one of them.

One of our poet's distinguishing features is, the high estimate he gives to moral greatness. This excites our astonishment the more, since students worship little else than intellectual: the intellect is their idol: at its shrine they bow and do homage; on its altar, immolate themselves. Pollok entered the heathen temple—beheld the pompous rites—listened to the magnificent, outbursting hymn; but it arose not to the Supreme. He saw through the splendid and radiant semblance: true men ever see clearly—no film on their eyes. Moral greatness was alone good, alone holy—it sanctified all; without it, everything was worthless and unhallowed. He departed from the marble pile, and proclaimed the oracle, that “man is great only as he is good.”

The glare of literature and science blinds us; their mellifluous warblings, and sublime creations, and tremendous visions seduce us; they gain an absolute mastery over the hearts of their votaries; and the man on whom genius smiles, be he ever so immoral, ever so vile, is courted and esteemed, and is enthroned the divinity of the world. In this Christian isle, he is placed in the highest seats, whether it be in the church or state. Our universities, more or less, foster and cherish this: their honours, their prizes, their rewards are for the intellectually great, not the morally good; there is scarcely a spirit that can pass through them without being scathed and injured. The Romanists act differently, and far more wisely.

Intellectual without moral worth ever gives a false

light: it may dazzle for a time, but its brightness is fictitious, it is not its own; it is faint and sickly, when contrasted with the resplendent radiance of moral good. Whether is it greater, whether is it better, to be endowed with gigantic talent, or to overcome the unholy dispositions of the heart, to curb its unlawful desires, to triumph over its evil and fallen nature, and from the wreck of our condition to arise in majesty and purity, and the image of the Invisible? One is the endowment of the soul, which it cannot help, which it cannot resist; the other is the conquest of the Divine energy over the lost and ruined man.

One is the fortuitous adjunct of the mind; the other, the success of a renovated will over the remains of iniquity: the one without the other links us with the fallen; the other is alone able to assimilate us to the Deity. Whether is it greater, whether is it better, to depict scenes of grandeur and sublimity, or to breathe upwards the deep sigh of repentance, and the broken sound of contrition?—whether is it greater, whether is it better, to strike the harp's immortal chords with a master's hand, or to kneel at the foot of Calvary, and there, with every pollution and guilt forgiven, feel that we are one with Him—even the Eternal?—whether is it greater, whether is it better, to entrance for awhile the faculties of the soul in the living beauty of literature, or, when all is dark, and all is dreary, to go, and reposing on the bosom of the Son of Mary, feel that we have in Him a hope and a joy which shall never be taken away, and that this hope and this joy will radiate into everlasting brightness and ever-blessed glory. Which approximates nearest to the Father of Spirits, the holy, the hallowed One?

Not that we seek to lower the standard of intellectual greatness beneath its just and legitimate station; but we cannot—we dare not—allow it to usurp the throne of a superior and more beautiful attribute. Are we to bow suppliantly at its footstool, because, forsooth, multitudes do so? Is our heart's best, and our heart's warmest blood ever to flow as an offering to this idol? Is all the untainted loveliness and unclouded magnificence of moral greatness to be forgotten, and dimmed, and put out, in the lurid blaze of unsanctified genius? Are we to go on, year after year, neglecting the soul's divinest culture in a hot and feverish pursuit of its honours and emoluments? Are we to cringe, to favour, to flatter? Bring the spirit's beauty to the light; let the pure eye of the Everlasting beam upon it, as in days gone by it was wont to do; give it room; let it grow and increase; make it the requisite qualification of every candidate for holy orders; then will it flower and scent the heavens and the earth with the richest odours.

The intellect may accomplish much for the world's regeneration, but the heart more: one is but as a shadow to the reality—a phasm to the fact—the cold, glimmering starlight to the resplendent blaze of day. If this earth is to be again covered with innocence—if peace and plenty are to veil her valleys and her plains—if the hymn of homage and the anthem of praise are to be wafted upwards on every wind—if sin and misery are to be for ever banished to some desolate isle, and grief and sorrow to depart, and never more to vex the soul, and murder and death to be chained to some far-off land—and if we are no more to be ravaged by the pestilence, the famine, the curse, but become a sunny

clime and a blessed people, it will be by the renewed heart's solemn petitions, and the renewed heart's solemn deeds. Earth will blush in her pristine beauty and pristine grace when moral sway assumes her lawful, and legitimate, and eternal supremacy.

Pollok, however, is much too dark and gloomy; he delights in terrible paintings. Hell, and hell's blackness and eternal torture, are his great themes; he has here room for his imagination—it is his fancy's highest play. And even the beautiful things of earth are somewhat dimmed and blighted. It is very much the custom to despise their loveliness, and particularly in the pulpit. The affections, too, are looked upon with a jealous eye? Why is this? Surely the oracles do not militate against them? Mother, love thy babe; it is not sin: love it ever; thou canst not err: and when at eventide it comes to thee, and throws its little arms around thy neck, and hides its little head within thy bosom, tell it of heaven—that heaven is as soft and as sweet as a mother's love—and it will never forget. Thou canst not love it too well. Cling to it—cleave to it; caress it ever; and it will pour all its affections, and all its cares, and all its desires into thine own lap. Mother, love thy child!—to love it is not idolatry; if it be so, then welcome idolatry. Ah, that fond babe, with its clear blue eye, and ruby lips, and rosy cheeks, and open countenance, and full-hearted tenderness, and gushing feelings, and confiding trust, will learn the delicious quiet of heaven on thy arms and on thy bosom. There let it repose; and when the anxieties of life press sore, and friends prove faithless, and kinsmen and dearest objects die, will it remember that heaven is a haven sweeter and more secure than even

a mother's love. And what exquisite joy for thee! In cherishing thine infant, thou dost reap some foretaste of the coming bliss; to thee it is a symbol. Entwine thy purest affections around it, and bathe it ever with the bursting emotions of thy soul: love it; there is not, there cannot be idolatry in loving thy child! Why should the yearning heart be constrained and straitened with the censure of excessive love: there can be none. Censure, away! Oh, Jesu, whom man despised, and whom man insulted, was nursed on a mother's knee, and "drew milk as sweet as charity" from a mother's breast!—and he whom none cared for, and whom all rejected, enlivened the lonely watchings of his mother and charmed away her toils with his lisplings and his prattle. Prattle on, dear babe, and lean on the bosom of her who brought you forth, and deem that the better land is all as beautiful and all as true as the throbbings of that maternal breast: and mothers, love your little ones; they will remind you of the clime where the wild olive, and the cedar, and the violet grow; where the birds sing their hymn in the twilight hour; where the sound of running waters soothe the spirit to a serene repose; where the moon and the stars gleam down upon its blessed intelligences, and where all is sacred and inviolate tenderness. Mother, love thy child!

Religion is not dark—religion is not gloomy. Young man, who now gazest on that sweet being sitting by thy side, and deemest her all too good for earth, think not that religion will make you dull—will blight your new-sprung bliss; think not it will shadow that face, which beams so confidently and so tenderly on yours, with austerity and with sternness; think not that, when

ye walk out at eventide beneath the foliage of majestic trees, it will give a harshness to that voice which now sounds more delicious than the enchanting and mystic melody of the twilight hour; think not that it will withdraw that affection which is riveted upon you for ever, and give instead thereof a reserved attachment. If it did so, then perish religion! But the faith of Jesus does not this; and herein it proves its divine origin and divine commission. Love that being still; love her infinitely; and this faith will but make that face more beautiful, and that bosom more constant, and that affection more hallowed, and that confiding trust more confiding still, and that heart more throbbing, and yearning, and bursting, and tender, and devoted, and blessed.

It is much to be lamented that religion is so often portrayed in such dark and gloomy colours, as if we had no right to enjoy the beauty and the tenderness of this lower world; as if the deepest and the purest affections of the breast were unhallowed and unholy. Religion is not thus scowling—is not thus a black, thunderous cloud; it is rather the blue empyrean, and the soft, mellowed light in which float all things lovely and all things fair. Spiritualisms may talk as they please, etherealisms may prate about a limited attachment and a limited regard, but what says the highest holiness? We read—"Husbands love your wives, even as Christ loved the church." What means this "even as"? What signifies this model of love? Does it speak shackles, and chains, and fetters, and bondage? Did Jesus bind his affections with any cords? Could they be estimated? Are they not measureless? Were they reckoned and weighed? Was he afraid of loving

too much? Was it not rather his glory that he loved so like a God? Did he count it sinful and idolatry to give all his being and all his existence to an unchanging and everlasting love? Was it not the consummation of his magnificent character that he loved so well and so truly? And shall we talk of wrong in loving those united to us by so near and precious a relationship? Shall we enchain our deep, deep feelings? Shall we give them boundaries? Shall we place landmarks? Shall we call in the throbbing breast? Shall we compress the dilated breast? Shall we dim the deity within us? Did Christ thus? Ah! there was no coldness and reserve in him; shall there be any in us?

Call religion, and repose on her sweet, soft bosom: dedicate thyself to Jesus; it will not make thee dull; it cannot bedim thy ecstatic joy. How can it, when its essence is love; its rule, love; its precepts, love; its influence, love; its beamings, love. Can love, then, render one gloomy? Ah, no! It will gild the hill-tops with golden light, and cast radiant beauty into the vales below. To be holy is to be happy; and that is not, that cannot be religion which darkens our earthly blessings. Go, then, and give thyself to the meek, the gentle Saviour; his tenderness is softer than the balmy breath of a summer's eventide; and thy love for friend and kin will deepen and strengthen until it becomes as profound as the vast tide of existence, or the infinite range of being.

And, indeed, this love to Jesus does but call into finer play the other loves of the soul; just in the same manner as the love of a friend quickens and deepens the love to wife and child. The more we love, the more we may love; each affection is, however,

different and distinct from the rest; they never commingle, but they receive a sevenfold lustre from each other; just as some woodland dell is beautiful, but it puts on a more winning grace when the slant rays of yonder sun light up its dark and luxuriant foliage.

The purest affection of the human breast is the love of God as revealed in the Mediator; and it is, doubtless, this which renovates the soul, and casts on the once dismal chaos gleams of the coming glory. But whilst we acknowledge this, we see no necessity to disparage the other attachments which swell in the spirit of man; that is never raised by the censuring of these; Christ did not thus; he knew what was in us, and he acted as became the divine Original.

Our love to parent, and friend, and kin may be infinite; our love to wife may be infinite; our love to Jesus may be infinite; and it does not necessarily follow that any one of these will cast a shade upon its fellows. Folly and idiocy to think so! Dive below the surface, and we shall see, that instead of clashing with each other, they but gleam beauty and radiant sweetness. Do the colours of the rainbow look discordant?—breathe they not a perfect symmetry and a perfect harmony?—blend they not so softly and so delicately, yet each keeping its own distinct hue, that if one were gone, all the rest would suffer in their loveliness? And the first streak in the east, when dawn awakes, doth it not gather much of its brightness from the surrounding twilight and the darkened hemisphere? Hast thou ever cast thine eye on a bed of flowers, and hast thou not remarked how their varied tints fell into one rich and golden whole? And in looking back on thy past life, does not every event and every cir-



cumstance, however distinct, and however separate, become suffused with the same glowing colouring and the same soft, mellowed grace? And higher: Do not the attributes of the Eternal, which are infinite and immaculate, pour upon each other a more refulgent splendour and a more exhaustless magnificence?

So with the affections: to raise one at the expense of another is absurd; rather cultivate them all; and each will then breathe a fragrance sweeter than the woodbine at the first glimmer of day, and give forth a more delicious music than the dying fall of an *Æolian* harp, when the sun sinks down; and undulations softer than the gentle swelling of the bosom, when wrapt in blissful dreams; and a cadence more enchanting than the sigh of sleeping babe; and a sound more still and richly melodious than when the dew trembles on the early primrose; and a strain more thrilling than when the calm murmur of the sea breaks on the shore. And the religion of Jesus will throw starlight, and moonlight, and sunlight on them all; and they shall kindle with a brighter radiance, and glow with a more luscious beauty, and blush with a deeper grace, and speak a language more spiritual than when man turns upwards his eye on the vast heavens, and feels the divinity within!

When we speak of affection, we mean not that love which weds because of wealth and family and interest; we deem these adulteries. The man marries the gold, and not the woman, and therefore he is an adulterer; the woman marries the distinction, and not the man, and hence she is an adulteress. Hold intercourse with both? Away: name it not with that pure and hallowed attachment which clings and cleaves to the object of its

choice through sunshine and shade, through happiness and distress, through welcomings and desertions; which abides by it for ever!

Young man, love thou thy wife! no limit place to that affection; darken it not with the calumny that it is idolatry; shackle it not with self-forged fetters; let it be infinite and boundless; in it thou shalt find delicious bliss; it will teach thee of heaven; it will reveal things unspeakable; it will open up the fair beauty of that orient clime where all is unfading as the Everlasting; it will roll music on thine ear; it will pour unutterable sweets into thy lap; thy home will beam with lovekiness; it will be a symbol of the everlasting rest. Love her; cherish her: thy reward will be vast;—love her; cherish her: thy nature will be elevated;—love her; cherish her: thine heart will gush with the sublime and imperishable joy. And when this world has wounded thee, and grieved thee, then turn thee to her bosom, and thou shalt find thy heaven of trust and bliss; and soon ye shall both turn to the soft, sweet haven of serene repose. It is not idolatry, this connubial love; thy being will become perfected and ennobled. What! idolatry to love that faithful creature who has reposed her all of earthly happiness, and much of her heavenly, in your arms? Surely God never meant this. Idolatry! if this be idolatry, we know not what it means. Husband, love thy wife, and behold, in that beautiful eye and fair countenance, gleams of the coming sunshine. Oh, shame to term the heart's fondest feelings, and the heart's fondest love, idolatry!—it is not so. We complain not of this: ye cannot love parents, and wife, and child too much: sacrilege to love them with a weak,

limited, and vacillating faith! We admire you for regarding those beings with an infinitude of love; we delight to witness this,—ah, no coldness, no icy chilliness, for us. But, whilst we glory in such attachments,—mark, spiritual soul, here is the distinction,—we censure you, that with all this exhaustless love, and all these exquisite feelings, and all these trembling emotions and keen sensibilities, you have no eye and no heart for the Creator; we blame you, not that you love child, and deem its innocent face so fair; not that you love wife, and deem her so fondly precious; not that you love parents, and deem them the sweetest semblance of the divine; but that with all this bursting affection, and unutterable clings and cleavings, and throbbing desires, you have no regard for the altogether lovely and the altogether beautiful: that whilst your eye can melt into tears, and your heart soften into sensibility at the sight of those “whom God has given,” you have no tear and no sensibility for the bountiful Giver himself. Oh, we rejoice in that you cherish your beloved ones; but we agonize in thinking that, with all this, ye do not love Him “who is the brightness of the Father’s glory, and the express image of his person.”

Home may possess exquisite beauty; but Jehovah’s lineaments are more deeply tinged with the eternal colourings of enchanting loveliness. Home, with all its tender care, and fond solicitude, and constant affection, and hallowed faith, and pure happiness, is a symbol of the fair land above; it is the reflection of that sunny clime. Never cease, then, to rejoice thyself therein; it will man thee and exalt thee.

We are not to look jealously upon the affections and

the sanctities of home; the oracles do not require this: we are to give up our sins, our evil thoughts, our roving dispositions, our wanderings, our love to the moral debased world, our pride of life, our pollutions, our unhallowed hearts: we are to become holy, meek, gentle; we are to be as God—like God: Jesus is to be in us; we are to do his works; abound in his labours. Temptation after temptation must be overcome; assault after assault beaten off: the Spirit is to sanctify, to spiritualize: but we are to enjoy God's mercies; we are to reap happiness from those things he has given; we are to be fond and fonder parents; we are to be dutiful and more dutiful children; we are to be loving and more loving husbands; we are to be tender and more tender wives; we are to be faithful and more faithful friends; we are to be all that is "true, and honest, and lovely, and of good report;" and truer, and more honest, and more lovely, and of better report. Religion, instead of snapping these asunder, gives them a loftier and higher import; irradiates with a sunnier beam: it teaches, inculcates, commands the enforcement of every one; it kindles all its angers and fulminates all its wrath at the non-performance.

We do not believe there is such a thing as idolatry in these: the Bible never yet said so; and what are man's words? Idolatry is the paying of that regard and worship to a semblance, or simulacrum, which belongs only and simply to the thing or being it personates. Now, we love a child as a child; we love a wife as a wife; we love them for what they are, and not for what they are not. Idolatry is something distinct and different: it loves and worships the star,

or flower, or painted wood, because it deems the flower, or star, or painted wood to be God; hence it is idolatry, semblancy, falsity.

God accuses us not of loving wife or child, but of not loving Him. How could he so accuse us, since the love to Him but increases and deepens our love to them? One would think, if we could love these objects too much, that when we become lovers of Jehovah, our regard would be lessened. But is this the case? Ah, Christian, we can tell you that those hours in which we have been the most spiritually-minded, and when the very being seemed to float in a profound ocean of unruffled, and infinite, and delicious love, and when the Eternal seemed above, and beneath, and around us, and when earth, sea, and sky seemed to be lighted up with a soft golden glory, and when the air teemed with angelic hymns, and the clouds breathed out divine harmonies, and when the body itself seemed etherealized, and in sweetest accordance with the highest aspirations of the soul, even then have we beheld a chaster beauty and a fairer loveliness in the relationships of earth. And in like manner, when we have been far off from God, when we have erred and strayed like lost sheep, and when iniquity has prevailed against us as a tide, have we beheld less enchanting grace in the hallowed ties of our nature. How is this? If it be wrong to love with an infinite affection, then why, when holiest and purest, do we love the most?

An idol is that which prevents our entire love to the Eternal; but we know that the relationships of earth expand and deepen that affection. Wherefore, then, the wrong?—whence the sin? “Covetousness is idolatry.” Why? Because, where it reigns, the love of God can-

not. But is it so with the tendernesses of our hearts? Oh, when we have been the most in communion with the Everlasting, then have we felt a more bursting, throbbing, unutterable fondness for wife and child and kinsmen. Spirit! wilt thou shackle, wilt thou repress thy gushing attachments? Cherish, cherish them! on earth they will gild the landscape with a golden light, and in heaven they will throw a tide of refulgent glory over its luxuriant plains.

And in the coming brightness of the earth's spiritual morn, love will be the great principle, the great and alone necessity there: it will rule, it will quicken, it will vivify; it will throw a beauty over every event and every occurrence of life. Love, that will be our presiding, pervading blessing; it shall be the one object of our being, even to progress in love, to tread onwards in love, to look upwards at the cross, the full, perfect, unsullied incarnation of love. There will every glance be thrown, whether the heavens be stormy, or whether the sunnier radiance of serener skies gleam upon us. Onwards, onwards in love: we shall know no other language but the dulcet language of love; it shall be the lisping of the babe, and the full, harmonious speech of manhood; it shall be the central attraction of the soul, the master energy of the spirit, the inextinguishable feeling of the heart. We shall live in love, dwell in love, be linked into one holy band of lovers.

And the world hath ever yearned after this full realization of love: from the sunset of Eden's pristine beauty, even till this very hour, hath its hopes and its aspirations been ever and anon fixed on love: from

the "deep abysmal pollutions" of its heart hath humanity ever and anon sent its longings and desires forth, and as often have they returned desolate and disappointed. Priests, altars, and temples, painting, statuary, and poetry, have pointed ever and anon to this one divine expectation. The world's throes and the world's tossings have ever and anon subsided, and then hath come mourning, and lamentation, and stern despair. Then again hath the music of its better being broken forth, and it has hymned its renewed anticipations; and heaven seemed sweeter and earth fairer in those hours of the spirit's sunshine; and love descended from the throne of universal dominion, and bound this far-off orb with its way-gone and fatherless children to the God of love. The manifestation of love came; and we live, and shall for ever live under its divinest influence: love will smile "each night and day" on the abode of the blessed inhabitants; deep, pure, perpetual love. It will burn more brightly than the fire-flame, which erst illumed with its odoriferous light, the still silent darkness when Zoroaster ministered; it will burn more brightly than the sacrificial gleam fed daily on the one altar of the Jewish nation, ever pointing to the one offering, and the one oblation for sin.

And thus will the world progress in love; that syren voice, which in days gone by seduced to ruin, will pour out its fervid syllables in a holy hymn to its Creator; love and affection will be lavished, to be lavished again in return; love and affection shall deepen, to become deeper in its giving back. There will be ever-enduring, ever-encircling love; the homes will be filled with melody, and "the solitary wastes" will glisten with beauty: it may be oftentimes stormy without, but

what heeds it, if all within be as the heaven of our God?

“We are all lovers:” a nobler and higher distinction than that given to the Patriarch in the grey dimness of the breaking day, when the world was in its dawn. And as the Jewish nation had ever in its name, Israel, an incentive to ever-prevailing prayer, so we have a still more exalted monitor in this, of being all one brotherhood of lovers, inasmuch as it is the perfection of heaven’s glory; and, hence, should heresy throw its dark mantle over this our England, shall we have the ever-cheering fact of our being all lovers, wherewith to oppose the armies of the aliens; and from our homes, in their calm and blessed peacefulness, and from our pure and infinite affections in all their chaste and cleaving tenderness, and from our yearning after the unsullied holiness, and from our looking upwards with filial gaze on the mysteries of a Father’s love, and a Spirit’s love, and a Saviour’s love, shall we gather a whole armoury of weapons wherewith to overcome every form of error and every shape of delusion. Home shall teach us love; God shall teach us love; heaven, earth, teach but love; and with love we dare hope and dare pray amid the blasting for a world’s sin and the darkness of a world’s joy! Six thousand years, according to the Persian, and Oromasdes shall reign as the universal love and the universal good; then peace, then quietude, then blessedness for ever!

And, indeed, what is this panting for the full glory and manifestation of love, this longing that the universe may float in the ocean of an everlasting affection, what is it but the desire after the perfect image of the Supreme?—and those glimpses of beauty which the eye



sees in poetry, and the architect sees in the magnificent pile, and the sculptor sees in the exquisite dream of his divine imagination, and the painter sees in his golden creation, and the husband sees in his clinging wife, and the mother sees in her blushing babe—what are these glimpses but so many revelations of the Eternal Beauty? what but so many insights into the character of the All-pure and the All-good? And man does well in loving these; for in so doing—oft, indeed, it may be unconsciously—he loves and worships the shaping and blessing power of Nature's wide domains. Love to these, to all these, is but part of the same moving and regenerating principle of love to God. They will not, indeed, ransom his spirit from the slavery into which it hath long been sold, but they will exert a purifying, and we had almost said a sanctifying, energy. Yea, in those dreams of beauty, in those love-lit visions, in those fair creations, in those intense longings after the highest and the best, in those sorrows for the world's spiritual and temporal agony, there is a gigantic influence at work, moulding the soul ever into a finer form, and knitting, if it would, the entire humanity for ever to the Deity.

Pollok, too, has fallen into the error so common amongst us, that God saw nothing in human nature, when fallen, to move his love; that we then became so corrupt and so polluted, that in us there was nothing which bound and united us to the Creator. We were sinful; we were a chaos of blasphemy, rebellion, impurity; we were as the broken cistern, and as the overthrown pillar. All this we acknowledge: we do well in so doing. But in this dim, black confusion, there were ever and anon streaks of a coming dawn, a breathing of life-giving winds: amidst all this deep spiritual degeneracy, there was ever and anon some thought arising to the Creator;

some inquiries how could man be just with God; amidst this clashing of interests, there was ever and anon some true and mighty principle struggling into being, some rays of the Divine. There were moments when man was sick of guilt, and pined for purity; when he knelt himself down upon some sea-rock, and as the sun came bursting forth in all his magnificence upon the wide ocean, prayed for something higher and something holier; when he wept over sin; when he mourned his iniquity. If this were not the case, what means the poet of antiquity in his fine majestic hymn to the Supreme, exclaiming, "For we are his offspring"? and in an earlier age, what means another bard in addressing the same divinity, exclaiming, "For thou hearest a man everywhere in pain"? and in later times, what means the altar raised beneath the beautiful Attic sky, and in the refined city itself, to the Unknown God, if they do not tell us that man is ever seeking, ever striving, in what way he may be reconciled to Jehovah; in what way he may regain his lost favour; in what way obtain back the ancient covenant of peace and hallowed blessedness.

Hast thou never beheld, O reader, the beautiful work of thy fingers destroyed, and hast thou not gathered up the fragments, and although it was broken into a thousand pieces, and its once beautiful form for ever lost, and that which was so exquisite a gem, and so often gazed upon with delight, and so frequently admired, has become shivered and splintered into shapeless atoms, yet hast not thou gathered up every part with a care and a gentleness never known before, and with feelings of love and yearnings of tender regard hast thou not placed it in thy cabinet of all precious things? Because it had forgotten its former grace,

was it therefore without one sweet association, one pleasant memory?—rather, did it not win thy pity, and find its way to thy swelling heart?

And so God; he created us in his own bright image; we were his glory, his delight; he caused the balmy breath to breathe upon us, and outstretched a serene, cerulean canopy above; but we soon broke ourselves into a million chaotic substances, and where once reigned perfect beauty and unsullied love, nought was seen but disorder and impurity; and where once arose the high hymn of praise, issued the clashing of hoarse rebellion and the defiance of an enemy. Ah, would not God stoop and gather up the shattered being? had he no pity on that which he himself adorned with so much grace and so much loveliness? Think you there was no yearning of the heart over us—nothing in us to draw his attention and regard? Yes, there was; and in this very fact, that we were the creation of his own hands. True, we were despoiled, yet were there relentings, and strivings, and utterings, and sighings after our pristine nature—we still longed for our primeval condition: and God did gather up the broken fragments, and with them made he a new man, fairer, and loftier, and brighter than him who erst walked in Eden's garden amid its untainted sweets.

Again, look on earth. Hast thou never seen, hast thou never heard of a love which has stood unquenched and undimmed amid the severest rebuffs and the cruellest desertion? Hast thou never seen it in one who, after giving her all of happiness and her all of being into the hands of the man who promised to cherish for ever, has been left desolate and alone; and who thus, left to pine in her cold and cheerless dwelling, has still

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loved on; and amid all his brutal and unfeeling conduct, hast thou not beheld her clinging with a fonder and a tenderer affection? We see, we hear it daily. It is true, that he whom she loves is ungenerous and unkind; but she loves him for what once he was. The days that are past, and in which were seen his smile and thrilling tenderness, and in which was heard the liquid language of his lips, often return; nay, they are ever with her: and for what he was then—for his gentleness, his affection, his kindness, does she love him now—will she cleave to him for ever!

And if this sublime affection is found, and found often, in the creature, shall it not be found in the Creator? Can he not love us for what once we were? May he not gaze on those peaceful hours, and that unruffled quietude, and that undisturbed repose, which some thousands of years back awoke the happiness of the first pair? Is the hymn of Eden forgotten? Is the promise of everlasting love and everlasting truth, though broken, unremembered? Is the purity and the bliss that once reigned there unrecorded?

The human spirit, blasted as it is by the east wind, and burnt up by the scorching sun, and eaten into by the worm, still loves an object for its past beauty and its past truth; and shall not the Holy One, who is said to be love, regard us with affection for what we once were? Was there no tie between us—nothing in us which moved his heart? no breathings that touched, no relentings which melted? no aspirations after good? no cries after perfection? no strivings to bring back the lost relationship? Oh, there was a light gleaming on our darkness like the darting forth of a sun-ray upon the billowy and surging ocean when

heaving beneath a black, brooding storm! This was enough; the clouds could be rolled away, and the deep and perilous waters become gently rippling under the fair, clear heavens.

To return. A few quotations from the "Course of Time," and we have done. The following, on the abode of the wicked, is one of the most powerful and terrific in the volume. When our poet came to depict the dark scenery of the world of woe, he seemed to lose all strength; he felt that he was treading on the same ground with Milton and Dante; he trembled lest he should be found wanting; he tried to write, but could not; he swept the lyre, but no sound was emitted; he touched again, but still no strain,—all thoughts seemed too poor, all paintings too dull: his imagination failed—his faculties gave way. The hour was even-tide—the time for solemn fancies; these departed, none were within call. Inspiration left, hope fled, energy reeled, darkness came; the stars were quenched in blackness; and then did Pollok cast himself upon his knees, and prayed for the assistance of the Supreme. He retired to rest: in the slumbers of the night he dreamed; hell was disclosed; we have the vision:—

Equipped and bent for heaven, I left yon world,  
My native seat, which scarce your eye can reach,  
Rolling around her central sun, far out  
On utmost verge of light: but first to see  
What lay beyond the visible creation,  
Strong curiosity my flight impelled.  
Long was my way, and strange. I passed the bounds  
Which God doth set to light, and life, and love;  
Where darkness meets with day—where order meets  
Disorder, dreadful, waste, and wild; and down  
The dark, eternal, uncreated night  
Ventured alone. Long, long on rapid wing  
I sailed through empty, nameless regions vast,  
Where utter Nothing dwells, unformed and void.

There neither eye, nor ear, nor any sense  
 Of being most acute, finds object ; there  
 For aught external still you search in vain.  
 Try touch, or sight, or smell ; try what you will,  
 You strangely find nought but yourself alone.  
 But why should I in words attempt to tell  
 What that is like, which is and yet is not ?  
 This past, my path descending, led me still  
 O'er unclaimed continents of desert gloom  
 Immense, where gravitation, shifting, turns  
 The other way ; and to some dread, unknown,  
 Infernal centre downwards weighs : and now,  
 Far travelled from the edge of darkness ; far  
 As from that glorious mount of God, to light's  
 Remotest limb, dire sights I saw, dire sounds  
 I heard ; and suddenly, before my eye  
 A wall of fiery adamant sprung up,  
 Wall, mountainous, tremendous, flaming high  
 Above all flight of hope. I paused and looked ;  
 And saw, where'er I looked upon that mound,  
 Sad figures traced in fire, not motionless,  
 But imitating life. One I remarked  
 Attentively ; but how shall I describe  
 What nought resembles else my eye hath seen ?  
 Of worm or serpent kind it something looked,  
 But monstrous, with a thousand snaky heads,  
 Eyed each with double orbs of glaring wrath ;  
 And with as many tails, that twisted out  
 In horrid revolution, tipped with stings ;  
 And all its mouths, that wide and darkly gaped,  
 And breathed most poisonous breath, had each a sting,  
 Forked and long, and venomous, and sharp ;  
 And in its writhings infinite, it grasped,  
 Malignantly, what seemed a heart, swollen, black,  
 And quivering with torture most intense ;  
 And still the heart, with anguish throbbing high,  
 Made effort to escape, but could not ; for,  
 Howe'er it turned—and oft it vainly turned—  
 These complicated foldings held it fast.  
 And still the monstrous beast, with sting of head  
 Or tail transpierced it, bleeding evermore.  
 What this could image, much I searched to know ;  
 And while I stood and gazed, and wondered long,  
 A voice, from whence I knew not, for no one  
 I saw, distinctly whispered in my ear  
 These words : " This is the worm that never dies."  
 Fast by the side of this unsightly thing  
 Another was portrayed, more hideous still ;

Who sees it once, shall wish to see't no more.  
 For ever undescribed let it remain !  
 Only this much I may or can unfold :  
 Far out it thrust a dart, that might have made  
 The knees of terror quake, and on it hung,  
 Within the triple barbs, a being, pierced  
 Through soul and body both. Of heavenly make  
 Original the being seemed, but fallen,  
 And worn and wasted with enormous woe.  
 And still around the everlasting lance  
 It writhed convulsed, and uttered mimic groans :  
 And tried and wished, and ever tried and wished  
 To die : but could not die. Oh ! horrid sight !  
 I trembling gazed, and listened, and heard this voice  
 Approach my ear : " This is eternal death."

Nor these alone : upon that burning wall  
 In horrible emblazonry, were limned  
 All shapes, all forms, all modes of wretchedness,  
 And agony, and grief, and desperate woe.  
 And prominent in characters of fire,  
 Where'er the eye could light, these words you read :  
 " Who comes this way behold, and fear to sin !"  
 Amazed I stood ; and thought such imagery  
 Foretokened within a dangerous abode.  
 But yet, to see the worst, a wish arose :  
 For Virtue, by the holy seal of God,  
 Accredited and stamped, immortal all,  
 And all invulnerable, fears no hurt.  
 As easy as my wish, as rapidly,  
 I through the horrid rampart pass'd, unscathed  
 And unopposed ; and, poised on steady wing,  
 I hovering gazed. Eternal Justice ! Sons  
 Of God ! tell me, if you can tell, what then  
 I saw—what then I heard ! Wide was the place,  
 And deep as wide, and ruinous as deep.  
 Beneath, I saw a lake of burning fire,  
 With tempest tossed perpetually ; and still  
 The waves of fiery darkness 'gainst the rocks  
 Of dark damnation broke, and music made  
 Of melancholy sort ; and overhead  
 And all around, wind warred with wind, storm howled  
 To storm, and lightning, forked-lightning crossed,  
 And thunder answered thunder,—muttering sounds  
 Of sullen wrath, and far as sight could pierce,  
 Or down descend in caves of hopeless depth,  
 Through all that dungeon of unfading fire,  
 I saw most miserable beings walk,  
 Burning continually, yet unconsumed ;

For ever wasting, yet enduring still;  
Dying perpetually, yet never dead.  
Some wandered lonely in the desert flames,  
And some, in fell encounter, fiercely met,  
With curses loud and blasphemous, that made  
The cheek of darkness pale; and as they fought,  
And cursed, and gnashed their teeth, and wished to die,  
Their hollow eyes did utter streams of woe.  
And there were groans that ended not, and sighs  
That always sighed, and tears that ever wept,  
And ever fell, but not in Mercy's sight.  
And Sorrow, and Repentance, and Despair  
Among them walked; and to their thirsty lips  
Presented frequent cups of burning gall.  
And as I listened, I heard these beings curse  
Almighty God, and curse the Lamb, and curse  
The earth, the resurrection morn; and seek,  
And ever vainly seek, for utter death!  
And to their everlasting anguish still,  
The thunders from above responding spoke  
These words, which, through the caverns of perdition  
Forlornly echoing, fell on every ear:  
"Ye knew your duty, but ye did it not."  
And back again recoiled a deeper groan:  
A deeper groan! oh, what a groan was that!  
I waited not, but swift on speediest wing,  
With unaccustomed thoughts conversing, back  
Retraced my venturous path from dark to light.

Horrible description this, and yet it was the one that gained our childish heart; we have loved him ever since that hour. We well remember it: we were sitting in a holy home and beneath a blessed roof when the dark picture visioned itself in characters of woe; we had never heard such deep, wild notes before. Our affections were once and for ever fixed; he became dearer than a brother; our enthusiasm was immense; we read, and read, and never tired. In the loveliest scenes of creation we would talk of Pollok; in the sweetest eventides, when buttercups and daisies flowered the meadows with beauty, we conversed about our poet; he was ever new, ever enchanting; he filled the whole



horizon of our thoughts—he influenced every faculty as a mighty spell; even at this moment, we feel the subduing witchery of that season. But the passage is, perhaps, the most powerful in the volume, and its intrinsic merits, without any associations, are great: bard never sketched a darker scene, not even he who wrote the immortal line—

“Abandon every hope, all ye that enter!”

Pollok's description places him in a strong light; his genius is more than powerful. There may be others, wearing the robe of beauty, and scented with rose and hawthorn; there may be others, whose sweet and silver intonations may please us better, and whose music is more in accordance with the loves, and memories, and hopes of our nature; but there is none which exhibits so strikingly the massy, sinewy, and mighty soul of the author;—there are others, doubtless, over which we linger with dewy eye, and whose soft cadences and delicious warblings remind us of all that is lovely, and pure, and hallowed in earth and heaven; whose descriptions are full of creation's fairest flowers, and most resplendent gems, and deepest quietudes, and holiest calms, and most unruffled peace, and blessed domestic joys; but there is none which displays our poet in loftier greatness;—there are others which shadow forth all that is enchanting, and graceful, and even magnificent in nature, which bring before us the grandeur of the ever-rolling universe, which present the sublime principles of Jehovah's kingly government, which sing of redemption's glory; but none in which we find such signs of gigantic imagination. We are, indeed, melted to woman's tenderness by his

sketches of home's unsullied worth and unsullied sunlight; we feel acutely his notes of woe; we are tremblingly alive to their every sigh of sorrow; we are ravished with his song of Mount Zion, and the undisturbed serenity of that fair land; but in this we feel an awful dread; it, as it were, brings us to the very brink of the pit, not edged with moss, and amaranths, and wild violets, but with the loathsome nettle and poisonous hemlock; and we almost hear its wailings and weepings—everlasting weepings, everlasting wailings.

Not that we agree with Pollok in the truth of his description do we thus admire the sketch; we rather believe the agony to be mental, and not physical. Were we to describe that abode, we would cast around it every manifestation of God's love, and God's tenderness, and God's care; we would give the gentle dew, and the myriad flowers, and the luxuriant trees, and the soft, purling streams, and the quiet solitudes, and the million stars, and the resplendent sun, and the heaving, swelling, rolling ocean, and islands, beautiful and bright, and cool eventides, and fresh-scented dawns, and music on every breeze, and birds empurpled and silvered with gorgeous plumage, and "cattle on a thousand hills," and the lowing of the kine, and the melodies of copses, and roads winding along green, grassy valleys, and up the sides of towering mountains; and there should be the bee and butterfly, and all the sights and sounds of creation; and their cities should be built of the sapphire stone, the emerald, and the amethyst, and their palaces "bastioned with pyramids of glowing gold;" and all should be magnificent with excessive light. But we would gratify every unholy

passion—every impure lust; no restraint should be there. We would give them up to do their own wills and their own desires; there should be war, and minstrelsy, and dancing, and lasciviousness should play her part; and cruelty should sit enthroned, and all good should depart, and all hallowed feeling be forever banished. They should feel conscious that they were without God, aliens from his blessed family; and they should work every evil work; and some would love, and some would loathe: charity there would be none—tenderness there would be none—peace there would be none: there should be strife, and discord, and everlasting misery, and eternal torture!

But we turn to a fairer scene—a scene of early love:—

It was an eve of autumn's holiest mood;  
The corn-fields, bathed in Cynthia's silver light,  
Stood ready for the reaper's gathering hand,  
And all the winds slept soundly. Nature seemed,  
In silent contemplation, to adore  
Its Maker. Now and then, the aged leaf  
Fell from its fellows, rustling to the ground;  
And, as it fell, bade man think on his end.  
On vale and lake, on wood and mountain high,  
With pensive wing outspread, sat heavenly Thought,  
Conversing with itself. Vesper looked forth  
From out her western hermitage, and smiled;  
And up the east, unclouded, rode the moon,  
With all her stars, gazing on earth intense,  
As if she saw some wonder walking there.

Such was the night, so lovely, still, serene,  
When, by a hermit thorn that on the hill  
Had seen a hundred flowery ages pass,  
A damsel kneeled, to offer up her prayer—  
Her prayer nightly offered, nightly heard.  
This ancient thorn had been the meeting-place  
Of love, before his country's voice had called  
The ardent youth to fields of honour, far  
Beyond the wave; and hither now repaired,  
Nightly, the maid, by God's all-seeing eye

Seen only, while she sought this boon alone—  
 Her lover's safety and his quick return.  
 In holy, humble attitude she kneeled,  
 And to her bosom, fair as moonbeam, pressed  
 One hand, the other lifted up to heaven.  
 Her eye, upturned, bright as the star of morn,  
 As violet meek, excessive ardour streamed,  
 Wafting away her earnest heart to God.  
 Her voice, scarce uttered, soft as zephyr sighs  
 On morning lily's cheek, though soft and low,  
 Yet heard in heaven, heard at the mercy-seat.  
 A tear-drop wandered on her lovely face;  
 It was a tear of faith and holy fear,  
 Pure as the drops that hang at dawning-time,  
 On yonder willows, by the stream of life.  
 On her the moon looked steadfastly; the stars,  
 That circle nightly round the eternal throne,  
 Glanced down, well pleased; and everlasting love  
 Gave gracious audience to her prayer sincere.

O had her lover seen her thus alone,  
 Thus holy, wrestling thus, and all for him!  
 Nor did he not; for oftentimes Providence,  
 With unexpected joy, the fervent prayer  
 Of faith surprised. Returned from long delay  
 With glory crowned of righteous actions won,  
 The sacred thorn, to memory dear, first sought  
 The youth, and found it at the happy hour,  
 Just when the damsel kneeled herself to pray.  
 Wrapped in devotion, pleading with her God,  
 She saw him not, heard not his foot approach.  
 All holy images seemed too impure  
 To emblem her he saw. A seraph kneeled,  
 Beseeching for his ward, before the throne,  
 Seemed fittest, pleased him best. Sweet was the thought!  
 But sweeter still the kind remembrance came,  
 That she was flesh and blood, formed for himself,  
 The plighted partner of his future life.  
 And as they met, embraced, and sat, embowered  
 In woody chambers of the starry night,  
 Spirits of love about them ministered,  
 And God, approving, blessed the holy joy!

Poets have been accused of painting life fairer than  
 it is: their colours, it is thought, have been too  
 bright and beautiful. And on no other subject have  
 they been questioned so much as upon their delineation

of the affections. We cannot say that we have any sympathy with such complaints; we doubt very much if the tints have been too glowing: to our minds, the rays of heaven have not fallen too strongly; their sketches are not flower-scented and sunlit enough; they do not reach the reality. The throbbing emotion, the bursting soul, the keen sensibility, the rich silence, the tender glance, the soft, dream-like pressure, the beaming expression, the soft, dream-like pressure, the hallowed embrace, the deep, thrilling language, the undisturbed and profound peace, the gathering together of all regard around one object, the gentle clinging, the sweet dependence, the sheltering under the wing of love, the vast stretchings into infinitude, the union of spirit—oh, what pencil can shadow these in all their fulness and unutterable blessedness? The heart is higher, and loftier, and holier than the intellect.

And yet there are some who deem it manly to scoff at these divine feelings. Shall the holiest ties be trifled with? shall they be toyed with? shall they be ridiculed? If the spirit loves, there is increase of happiness; there is sweeter sunlight; there is softer felicity; there is more melting bliss; there is the exaltation of every faculty; there is the enthronement of every beautiful reality. Love is too sublime to be made the subject of our sport: make ourselves merry with it?—shame on manhood! It is a solemn and a sacred thing: the mind which trifles with the theme is lowered in our estimation; it is the sign of a thoughtless heart. That which is the nearest approach to the Divinity—that which ennobles the intellect—that which expands and elevates the whole moral being—that which dignifies the soul—that which renders

creation more exquisitely beautiful, and gives a deeper tinge to its waters, and a deeper blue to its skies, and more magnificent tints to its rising and its setting suns, and envelopes every form and shape of nature in a more spirit-like loveliness, and makes every flower and every tree breathe out a more mellifluous hymn—that which renders home worthy of heaven—that from which the Eternal draws to describe his own feelings and his own emotions towards the children of this estranged orb—shall it excite our merriment?

We rejoice when the spirit of man loves; for it is then bracing itself with vigour, and clothing itself with power; it is the commencement of a diviner existence. We speak not of sickly sentimentalism; that we know not. Ah, it commands our reverence when, in the deep solitudes of our bosom, we muse over its character and hallowed bearings: its influence is genial as a sunbeam, and yet gigantic as the vast swellings of eternity; it claims the seriousness of the immortal soul. It may be, and doubtless is, the fashion among a certain class to trifle with its blessedness. Let it be so; it has taught us a holier lesson. We may be alone in our view; and yet we are not alone: the celestial hierarchy is with us, the Deity himself is with us, all heaven—the beautiful and glorious heaven—is with us. “God is love.” Trifle, then, with love? It was love which made the universe, and cast therein her million stars; it was love which created man: ah! it was love that, when that being had erred and strayed far out into the wild, wintry desert of sin, brought him back again to the fold and family of God. The Omnipotent sits on the throne of love; his sovereignty is a rule of love; his presence is the perfection of love. Love

beams in every flower, and glitters in every dewdrop. The vast canopy of day whispers of love—its clouds, its showers, its rainbows all breathe out love. Even the storm, which beats so loudly against our windows, and the hurricane which lashes the ocean into fury, tell of love. Love is everywhere; it pervades all existence; it is the highest, holiest, divinest essence.

But take another note of woe; it is the poet's humour, not ours:—

Our sighs were numerous, and profuse our tears,  
For she we lost was lovely, and we loved  
Her much. Fresh in our memory, as fresh  
As yesterday, is yet the day she died:  
It was an April day; and blithely all  
The youth of nature leaped beneath the sun,  
And promised glorious manhood; and our hearts  
Were glad, and round them danced the lightsome blood,  
In healthy merriment, when tidings came  
A child was born; and tidings came again,  
That she who gave it birth was sick to death:  
So swift trode sorrow on the heels of joy!  
We gathered round her bed, and bent our knees  
In fervent supplication to the Throne  
Of mercy, and perfumed our prayers with sighs  
Sincere, and penitential tears, and looks  
Of self-abasement; but we sought to stay  
An angel on the earth, a spirit ripe  
For heaven; and Mercy, in her love, refused:  
Most merciful, as oft, when seeming least!  
Most gracious, when she seemed the most to frown!  
The room I well remember, and the bed  
On which she lay, and all the faces, too,  
That crowded dark and mournfully around.  
Her father there and mother, bending, stood;  
And down their aged cheeks fell many drops  
Of bitterness. Her husband, too, was there,  
And brothers, and they wept; her sisters, too,  
Did weep, and sorrow comfortless; and I,  
Too, wept, though not to weeping given; and all  
Within the house was dolorous and sad.  
This I remember well; but better still  
I do remember, and will ne'er forget,

The dying eye! That eye alone was bright,  
And brighter grew, as nearer death approached:  
As I have seen the gentle little flower  
Look fairest in the silver beam which fell  
Reflected from the thunder-cloud that soon  
Came down, and o'er the desert scattered far  
And wide its loveliness. She made a sign  
To bring her babe: 'twas brought, and by her placed;  
She looked upon its face, that neither smiled,  
Nor wept, nor knew who gazed upon 't, and laid  
Her hand upon its little breast, and sought  
For it, with look that seemed to penetrate  
The heavens, unutterable blessings, such  
As God to dying parents only granted,  
For infants left behind them in the world.  
"God keep my child!" we heard her say, and heard  
No more. The Angel of the Covenant  
Was come, and faithful to his promise, stood  
Prepared to walk with her through death's dark vale.  
And now her eyes grew bright, and brighter still,  
Too bright for ours to look upon, suffused  
With many tears, and closed without a cloud.  
They set, as sets the morning star, which goes  
Not down behind the darkened west, nor hides  
Obscured among the tempests of the sky,  
But melts away into the light of heaven.

We have, in our quotations, chosen passages of a pensive cast, because they are more in accordance with the spirit of our poet. There are but few hymns of joy in the volume. In this he is the most perfect contrast to Cowper that we have. Cowper loves the beautiful of creation: Pollok, its sullen grandeur;—Cowper delights to dwell on mercy: Pollok, on vengeance;—Cowper lingers over the green slopes of the heavenly paradise: Pollok, over the dreary and dismal plains of woe;—Cowper's voice is like the mellow tones of the lute: Pollok's, like the broken sounds of the muffled drum;—Cowper speaks of the clear blue sky, and singing of birds, and purling of streams, and hum of bees, and whispering of woods, and scents of



flowers: Pollok, of the lowering thunder-storm, darkening the whole hemisphere into gloom;—Cowper reminds one of the tenderness of Jesus, and the sunlight radiance of eternal love: Pollok, of the stern mandates of Mount Sinai, and the awful claims of incensed justice;—Cowper is the silver chime of peace and plenty: Pollok, the solemn knell of the dying and the lost.

## HENRY ALFORD.

"Let us look at the higher regions of literature, where, if anywhere, the pure melodies of poesy and wisdom should be heard. Of natural talent there is no deficiency: one or two richly-endowed individuals even give us a superiority in this respect. But what is the song they sing? Is it a tone of the Memnon statue, breathing music as the light first touches it?—a liquid wisdom, disclosing to our sense the deep, infinite harmonies of nature and man's soul? Alas, no! It is not a matin or vesper hymn to the spirit of all beauty, but a fierce clashing of cymbals, and shouting of multitudes, as children pass through the fire to Moloch! Poetry itself has no eye for the invisible. Beauty is no longer the God it worships, but some brute image of strength, which we may well call an idol, for true strength is one and the same with beauty, and its worship also is a hymn. The meek, silent light can mould, create, and purify all nature; but the loud whirlwind, the sign and product of disunion, of weakness, passes on and is forgotten."—CARLYLE.

WE need not complain of halcyon songs and soothing canzonets: it is true that the spirit of the French Revolution threw much of its energy and reckless savageness into our literature, but it extinguished the sickly semblancy and sickly sentimentalism of a former age, which was worth all the contortions that have since been exhibited in some of our finest writers. The war-cry, and the trumpet-blast, and the atheistic scoff that followed, deadened, indeed, for awhile the melody of gentler bards: but the tumult has nearly ceased; it is daily becoming fainter and fainter; its echo is all that we hear; the whirlwind has passed, and

once again the calm, unruffled heavens are breathing down upon us quietude and peace.

The nineteenth century was ushered in by a pellucid strain, so exquisitely soft, and so exquisitely tender, that it lingers yet in the woods and dells, in the happy homes and domestic retreats of England, as some angelic purifier of all that is nearest and dearest to the heart of man. Scarce had the sweet cadence of this delicious hymn fallen from the harp of the sainted Cowper, when another pæan to holy love breathed upwards to the Everlasting from the dark green sister-isle; and from the rugged and romantic Scotland came notes of peace, and Leyden chanted the simple glories of creation; and the Nottingham youth sang pleasantly of the past, and in a sublimer mood wrote the two last stanzas of the "Christiad;" then Grahame walked forth on the quiet Sabbath morning and taught us to love bird, and bee, and butterfly, and the solemn service of our church, with its simple beauty and hallowed blessedness, and we were subdued and calmed; and even the stern and severe Crabbe spake sometimes of joy, and his pictures bore gleams of the coming sunshine; and in 1792 issued the enchanting music of memory's all-absorbing power and imperial influence, and from the wilds of Cumberland came majestic symphonies and divine harmonies, liquid as the lute, yet grand as the organ's swell; and there was Coleridge, more bewitching than the spirit of a dream, and in silvery intonations he told us "Christabel" and "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner," and in more magnificent soundings he rolled up to the blue summit of Mont Blanc, and its graceful flowers, and its sportive goats, and its dark ravines, and its rushing

torrents, and its fearful avalanches, and its gloomy pines, and its clear sky, and its rising sun, an anthem of kindling adoration, and in cooings softer than the dove's he told us how he won his own Genevieve; then were heard low, pensive warblings from the lips of Bowles, and these immortalized him; and Atherstone, so lofty and towering in his flight, could stoop and sing of undisturbed repose, in tones richer than those which erst fell from the Æolian harp when the breeze floated by, or from Memnon's lyre when the light first dawned on the dim and surging ocean; and over Lamb's "Essays" reigned a placid stillness; and Sotheby could revel for a season in his translation of the Pastoral Georgics; and Moore plucked the rose, and narcissus, and orange-blossom beneath the orient clime; and in 1799, Campbell's star, so brilliant and unwaning, beamed in the horizon "like to an angel, o'er the dying, who die in righteousness;" and Scott, amid his fair ladies and gallant knights, could yet delight himself in home's unsullied smile, and home's unsullied bliss; and Byron dropt some honeyed lines; and Shelley some finer and more ethereal eulogiums; and 1818 beheld Keats dreaming deliciously in his "Endymion," and "Lamia," and "Ode to a Nightingale;" and Heber sang the songs of Zion; and Herbert Knowles, in a country churchyard, looked upwards to the heavens and caught inspiration; and farther north, Pollok relented and spoke of children and domestic sweets, and burning friendship, and eternal affection; and out of Ayrshire came the gentle Montgomery, with his chaste and spiritual lyrics, and he whispered in more than Philomela's softness of the twilight hour; and Leigh Hunt, with all his quaintness, has

many a line of native beauty and touching sensibility; and John Clare could tell us of flowers, and clouds, and streams, and hay-fields, and harvest-homes, and the bliss of early love; and Wilson threw into his poetry all the warmth of his open-hearted nature; and Hemans gave us songs of parental and filial yearning, and fondness, and watchful care; and Bernard Barton, in less classical strains, penned his meditations on those charming scenes which meet the eye in every nook and corner of our land, and we felt refreshed with his Address to an Evening-Primrose, and his story of Bishop Hubert; and Procter mingled his now fine minstrelsy with the hymn thus swelling upwards to the throne, as he wandered on "the pebbled beach;" and Milman forgot his stateliness for awhile, and gave us "the merry heart that laughs at care;" and Croly, so oriental in his thought, and imagination, and language, could sometimes tune his harp to warble the praise of quiet happiness; and Landor turned and twined a wreath of familiar flowers, the daisy, and the woodbine, and the elder; and Joanna Baillie spoke of the bosom's tenderest attachments; and William Knox breathed scriptural simplicity in his Songs of Israel; and Thomas Pringle, when far off in Afric's desert region, remembered his fatherland and the tinklings of its Sabbath bell; and Elliott depicts the bramble-flower; and Norton looks on the shades of evening, and, as the shadows deepen, recalls many a pensive joy and pensive pleasure; and Caroline Southey sheds a tear over the Pauper's Deathbed; and Mary Howitt loves the Mountain Children and the English Churches; and Hood melts us with his tale of Eugene Aram; and Tennyson, in fine rolling music, strikes out, "Break,

break, break on thy crags, O sea!" and enchains us with his "Dear mother, Ida, hearken, ere I die!" and thrills the life-blood with "I'm to be queen of the May, mother—I'm to be queen of the May!" and Hartley Coleridge has not forgotten his illustrious sire; and D. M. Moir gazes back on auld lang syne, and tells us a soothing story: and in Scottish melody Burns sang, and Allan Cunningham, and Hector Macneill, and Robert Tannahill, and John Mayne. Nor can we pass over the Ettrick Shepherd with his beautiful Queen's Wake, and still more beautiful songs; and Motherwell, with his "I've wandered east, I've wandered west, through many a weary way," and his collection of ballads; and Robert Nicoll, with his "high thoughts of heaven," worthy a nobler name; and James Hislop, with his majestic Cameronian's Dream.

And what exquisite things have we not had from Mitford, and Gilpin, and Miller, and Howitt, and Washington Irving, and Macaulay! The very air teems with honeyed sweetness and softest sounds; and these have been our matin and our vesper hymns!

And he whose name heads our paper has sung a "hymn to the spirit of all beauty." It is distinguished by grace, delicacy, and simplicity: we cannot listen to its silver strain without being both refined and exalted; it takes possession of us. It was a calm Sabbath evening when we first caught its deep intonations; the sun was sinking in the west, and tinging the horizon with a golden hue; the warblings of birds in many a leafy tree rose upwards; the soft and gentle breeze, laden with the hawthorn and wild-rose, swept sweetly by. It was an hour of rich perfumes; the twilight stole down, giving a soothing dimness to the objects

spread around; the solemn notes of an old organ mingled with creation's sounds. Such was the holy season in which we knew of Alford. Harken:—

Methinks I can remember, when a shade  
 All soft and flowery was my couch, and I  
 A little naked child, with fair white flesh,  
 And wings all gold bedropt; and o'er my head  
 Bright fruits were hanging, and tall, balmy shrubs  
 Shed odorous gums around me, and I lay  
 Sleeping and waking in that wondrous air,  
 Which seemed infused with glory—and each breeze  
 Bore, as it wandered by, sweet melodies,  
 But whence I knew not: one delight was there,  
 Whether of feeling, or of sight, or touch,  
 I know not how—which is not on this earth,  
 Something all-glorious and all-beautiful,  
 Of which our language speaketh not, and which  
 Flies from the eager graspings of my thought,  
 As doth the shade of a forgotten dream.  
 All knowledge had I, but I cared not then  
 To search into my soul, and draw it thence:  
 The blessed creatures that around me played,  
 I knew them all, and where their resting was,  
 And all their hidden symmetries I knew,  
 And how the form is linked unto the soul;  
 I knew it all; but thought not on it then;  
 I was so happy.

And upon a time,  
 I saw an army of bright, beamy shapes,  
 Fair-faced, and rosy-cinctured, and gold-winged,  
 Approach upon the air; they came to me;  
 And from a crystal chalice, silver-brimmed,  
 Put sparkling potion to my lips, and stood  
 All round me, in the many-blooming shade,  
 Shedding into the centre where I lay  
 A mingling of soft light; and then they sung  
 Songs of the land they dwelt in; and the last  
 Lingereth even till now upon mine ear.  
 Holy and blest  
 Be the calm of thy rest,  
 For thy chamber of sleep  
 Shall be dark and deep;  
 They will dig thee a tomb  
 In the dark, deep womb,  
 In the warm, dark womb.

Spread ye, spread the dewy mist around him;  
Spread ye, spread, till the thick, dark night surround him—  
Till the dark, long night has bound him,  
Which bindeth all before their birth  
Down upon the nether earth.  
The first cloud is beamy and bright,  
The next cloud is mellowed in light,  
The third cloud is dim to the sight,  
And it stretcheth away into gloomy night:  
Twine ye, twine the mystic threads around him;  
Twine ye, twine, till the fast, firm fate surround him—  
Till the firm, cold fate hath bound him,  
Which bindeth all before their birth  
Down upon the nether earth.  
The first thread is beamy and bright,  
The next thread is mellowed in light,  
The third thread is dim to the sight,  
And it stretcheth away into gloomy night.  
Sing ye, sing the spirit song around him;  
Sing ye, sing, till the dull, warm sleep surround him—  
Till the warm, damp sleep hath bound him,  
Which bindeth all before their birth  
Down upon the nether earth.  
The first dream is beamy and bright,  
The next dream is mellowed in light,  
The third dream is dim to the sight,  
And it stretcheth away into gloomy night.  
Holy and blest  
Is the calm of thy rest,  
For thy chamber of sleep  
Is dark and deep;  
They have dug thee a tomb  
In the dark, deep womb,  
The warm, dark womb.  
Then dimness passed upon me; and that song  
Was sounding o'er me when I woke again  
To be a pilgrim on the nether earth.  
Twine ye, twine the mystic threads around him;  
Twine ye, twine, till the fast, firm fate surround him—  
Till the firm, cold fate hath bound him,  
Which bindeth all before their birth  
Down upon the nether earth.

How like the ethereal Shelley this is!—there is the same light, aerial spirit, the same high-wrought imagination, the same star-lit web—its music is magnificent.



Our poet appears to us to be one of the happiest of men; there is no repining, with its sullen discord; he enjoys those mercies which surround him; and in a calm, confiding trust he leans on the bosom of the universal Father. This feeling of blessedness pervades every line he has written; they all are tinctured with the same sweet and quiet colouring.

His longest poem, "The School of the Heart," is written in blank-verse—the language of immortal gods; so Young has it, and Pollok after him,—and displays great beauty of conception and chasteness of expression. Many are its scenes of sunlit happiness—many its songs of peace; it breathes an undisturbed and unruffled sweetness—an inviolate and imperishable love of the true and holy; it is encircled with the golden glory of a first and faithful attachment.

The poem opens with a fine description of Spring, followed by a liquid memory of the past, uttered in the ear of his beloved, which for sweetness of thought and grace of execution will find but few equals. It is the April morn; the bright and beautiful heaven is beaming on them; the leaves glitter as orient gems in the sunshine; they sit together on the grassy slope; this the tale of his remembrance:—

Few have lived  
As we have lived, unsevered ; our young life  
Was but a summer's frolic : we have been  
Like two babes passing hand-in-hand along  
A sunny bank on flowers—the busy world  
Goes on around us, and its multitudes  
Pass by me, and I look them in the face  
But cannot read such meaning, as I read  
In this of thine ; and thou, too, dost but move  
Among them for a season, but returnest  
With a light step and smiles to our old seats,  
Our quiet walks, our solitary bower.

Some we love well ; the early presences  
That were first round us, and the silvery tones  
Of those most far away, and dreamy voices  
That sounded all about us at the dawn  
Of our young life—these, as the world of things  
Sets in upon our being like a tide,  
Keep with us, and are ever uppermost.  
And some there are, tall, beautiful, and wise,  
Whose step is heavenward, and whose souls have past  
Out from the nether darkness, and been borne  
Into a new and glorious universe,  
Who speak of things to come ; but there is that  
In thy soft eye and long-accustomed voice  
Would win me from them all.

For since our birth,  
Our thoughts have grown together in one mould ;  
All through the seasons of our infancy  
The same hills rose about us—the same trees,  
Now bare, now sprinkled with the tender leaf,  
Now thick with full dark foliage—the same church,  
Our own dear village-church, has seen us pray  
In the same seat, with hands clasped side by side,—  
And we have sung together ; and have walked,  
Full of one thought, along the homeward lane ;  
And so were we built upwards for the trial  
That on my walls hath fallen unsparingly,  
Shattering their frail foundations ; and which thou  
Hast yet to look for, but hast found the help  
Which then I knew not—rest thee firmly there !

This is truly beautiful ; many have been the thoughts recalled by its perusal : the green hills of infancy, crowned by the darksome copse ; the wild, straggling lane, with its hedge-rows sprinkled with woodbine and convolvulus ; the babbling brook murmuring over its pebbly bottom, with its banks fringed with butter-cups, and daisies, and forget-me-nots ; the old halls, standing upon their sloping lawns, with their strange traditions and family histories ; the white-washed cottages, trellised with jessamine and rose, seen in the sunlight of evening ; the ancient church, half-covered with ivy, and partly hidden by the venerable yew, come before

us in sweet perspective, all awakened by these lines; and with these scenes return the forms and faces of those we loved in childhood's hour: we remember their kindnesses, and gentleness, and tenderness; we feel that they cannot come to us—we must go to them.

His feelings, on first leaving home and her he loved, are exquisitely described. It was morning; the light had just streaked the horizon; there was a freshness and a coolness in the air: at a wicker-gate they part, and take their last fond look: he journeys onwards. The novelty of the scenes banish for awhile his thoughts of that hallowed hour. A child played beneath the noon-day sun by some cottage porch: he was thrilled with delight. But listen:—

When first I issued forth into the world,  
Oh! I remember well—that very morn  
When we rose long before the accustomed hour,  
By the faint taper-light; and by that gate  
We just now swung behind us carelessly,  
I gave thee the last kiss: I travelled on,  
Giving my mind up to the world without,  
Which poured in strange ideas of strange things,—  
New towns, new churches, new inhabitants:  
And ever and anon some happy child  
Beneath a rose-trailed porch played as I passed;  
And then the thought of thee swept through my soul,  
And made the hot drops stand in either eye.

How different his second journey! no novelty now; no new sweets to attract; the happy child, and the rose-trailed porch, and the quiet villages, and the busy towns, assuage not his grief.

There was no beauty now,  
Of lands new seen—but the same dreary road  
Which bore me from thee first. I had no joy  
In looking on the ocean; and full sad,  
With inward frettings, and unrest I reached  
That steep-built village, on the southern coast.

And turning round, he gazes more tenderly into her face, and says :—

I remember well, one summer's night,  
A clear, soft, silver moonlight, thou and I  
Sat a full hour together, silently;  
Looking abroad into the pure pale heaven.  
Perchance thou hast forgotten : but my arm  
Was on thy shoulder, and thy clustering locks  
Hung lightly on my hand, and thy dear eye  
Glistened beside my forehead : and at length  
Thou saidst—" 'Tis time we went to rest ;" and then  
We rose and parted for the night : no words  
But those were spoken, and we never since  
Have told each other of that moment.

How like the feelings of every youthful lover, and what a beautiful picture! A summer's night—the sweet, soft moonlight—the arm fondly laid upon the shoulder—the eye glistening with tenderness—the calm and breathless stillness—the “ ’tis time we went to rest ”—the quiet parting with each other, with bosom perchance too full and too happy for utterance. What a delicious scene of true and faithful affection! how unlike the unhallowed attachment of the libertine; what music in the very silence! The eye alone speaks, and what language it breathes! The hour so peaceful—so spiritual—so ethereal. The place of interview and communion, the glorious rolling planet; their light, the silver crescent and the million stars; their perfumes, the summer flowers. What luxurious moments!—how allied their happiness to the pure and untainted bliss of Paradise. On them the dew seemed to fall more gently, and the moon to shed a more radiant brightness, and the stars to glimmer more resplendently.

After a separation, our poet and his fair one meet again: it is the leafy month of June, when the sky is one fine transparent blue, and the roses flower in all

their beauty, and the king-cups adorn the grassy meadows, and the elders whiten the hedge-rows, and the gay poppy waves in the corn-fields, and the sound of murmuring bees, and the scents of odoriferous shrubs, and the hum of birds, and the village chimes come ever and anon on the breeze.

Many are the lines addressed to his beloved, all of which are tinged with a delicate beauty; they contain nothing that can offend the most retiring modesty or the most fastidious taste, while there is everything to gratify the loving soul: they exhibit great elegance of fancy and manly vigour of style. Those who write on this subject are generally so fulsome, that we have more than once determined never more to read any amatory writing; but Alford is a noble exception; he is tender and chaste; and through the whole of these verses there runs a golden vein of sincerity and truth.

There are some spirits who are for ever telling us that this present life is dull, and cold, and cheerless, and that little or no real happiness is found below. Of such we would ask, what means the beauty of the outward creation—the magnificence of the midnight heaven—the sublimity of the crashing storm—the seasons, which roll unerringly around,—winter, with its fine frosty mornings and fire-side comforts; spring, with its buds, and blossoms, and light fresh green; summer, with its oriental softness and grace; autumn, with its ripened fruits, and fading leaves, and solemn, moaning winds? What means the day, ushered in by twilight and the invigorating air, and ere nightfall sinking away into dim and shadowy darkness again; and the dew that trembles on the early primrose, and the calm murmur of the sea when it ripples on the shore, and

the echo of a distant rill, and the sound of falling waters, and the perfume of the rose, and the odour of bean-fields, and the corn waving in the cooling breeze, and the flowing streams, and the glories of earth and heaven? Speak they no language to man's heart? Have they no tongue? Have they no voice? And the tinkling of the sheep-bell, when Vesper glimmers in the coming shades, the soft music of the village chimes, and the swelling anthem, and the melody of gentle lyrists, and the immortal minstrelsy of greater bards, and the love of kinsmen and their salutations, and the quiet home, with the holy joy of the mother "when from out its cradled nook she sees her little bud put forth its leaves;" and the fond wife, with her sunny smile and tender affection, and heroic devotedness, waiting to greet, with hallowed endearments, the husband, after his daily labour; and the evening and the morning hymn, and the fervent and humble prayer, and the thrill of the spirit when it first wakes to love, and the deep glance of the eye when the beloved object is near, and the throbbings we feel when a magnificent roll of music bursts upon the ear, and the sweet awakening at dawn after a terrible dream, and golden fleecy clouds, and sunset, and sunrise, and dark mountains stretching skyward, and lakes and deep-sunk dells, and the myriad insects that play in the unruffled quietude of evening, and the million birds, and the loud and divine harmonies of universal nature—what mean these? Call we these dull, and cold, and cheerless? Oh! around man's soul they cast a mighty and gigantic influence, drawing out his energies and his powers. Their everlasting solitudes, and everlasting murmurings, and everlasting loveliness, have breathed out and rolled upwards, and

spread onwards a tremendous anthem of tempest sounds and clear, silvery tones, massive, ponderous, indestructible.

Life teems with happiness: he who is content is happy: here lies the secret of earthly bliss; man's happiness is in his own soul; our misfortunes may prove so many sources of divine felicity; it depends on ourselves; we have power to make, power to unmake; hardships cannot shackle the mind, that is free; it can never be imprisoned, never enchained, unless we ourselves forge the fetters. Should affliction come, and woe, and desertion, there is one bosom which fondly beats to ours, and which loves us with an infinite love. Ah! they give a richer and a deeper scent to the domestic affections; they throw a halo of exquisite sunshine on the home of our regard; they breathe into it a more hallowed and a more unutterable blessedness. The family are linked together in a more confiding and tender sensibility; and there is unity of heart and unity of spirit: we may be the most happy whilst the most sorrowful. There is ever some mitigating circumstance—some light from the nether heaven—some delicious accents from above.

And with these opposers of the true and holy, there is ever the axiom—if, indeed, it be an axiom—that possession cloy: perhaps it is the popular, the pervading opinion; the multitude believe in it; the merchant on change, the student in his study, the noble in his hall, the minister in his pulpit, alike receive it; they seem never to have questioned it: and when we ask any for a proof of its verity, they are astonished, and often confounded. We deny its truth: we do so

firmly and conscientiously. Possession does not necessarily cloy: we never have experienced it.

Once a man, overcome with trials and sorrow, looked around on those things which had in the hour of sunshine gladdened and delighted him, and having found no comfort and no satisfaction, he uttered the sentiment that possession cloyed: one and another took it up, until it is now well-nigh the prevailing creed. Away with this empty echoing!

One great argument which seems to confirm this deeply-rooted idea is, that the reality ever disappoints the anticipation. This fault is generally chargeable on ourselves, and not necessarily in the thing itself; we too frequently expect that every delight will flow from one object; this is not fair or reasonable: a flower is calculated to yield one kind of pleasure, and the roll of thunders another; the happiness derived from hearing the soft cadence of the village bell is distinct from that of the loud crashing of sweeping winds; the lute, with its liquid notes floating across some peaceful landscape, from that of the organ's swell along "the dim cathedral aisles;" the gently flowing rivulet from the impetuous stream; whereas we too often imagine that one of these will yield us the enjoyments of the rest; and when we find our expectations disappointed, we deepen the discordant sound that possession cloys.

Possession does not necessarily cloy. A fine winter scene will produce different feelings in the heart from that of a sweet summer's evening; and as with nature, so with those books which are the melodies of nature. There is the blind old man of Scio, and there is the elegant bard of Mantua; both are pregnant with delight, but not of the same kind. Dante and Petrarch,



Spencer and Young, Ben Jonson and Thomson, Hall and Hazlitt, are each distinct and different, but each calculated to give his own peculiar pleasure. We can love them all; but surely it were vain to expect that each would afford a like gratification. Herein we generally err; we anticipate that the smooth, polished line will stir us like the clarion's blast; but are they less to be enjoyed on this account?—is the rose less beautiful because it is not so slender as the lily of the valley—the violet less graceful because it differs from the hyacinth—the honeysuckle less to be admired because its blossom is not so white and starry as the clematis, the hawthorn, because it is not streaked with the cerulean tint of the iris—the summer flowers of England, because not so luxuriant as those beneath the golden colouring of an Italian evening?—and is Herrick with his daffodils and daisies to be despised, because in his love of simple beauty he minds not the grander and sublimer features of the universe?

And in painting, do we grow weary of Claude Lorraine's golden beauty, and Ludovico Caracci's masterly Transfiguration, and Tintoret's wild and extravagant sketches, and Correggio's graceful elegance deepening oftentimes to grandeur, and Parmegiano's simple yet severe style, and Vandycke's soul-breathing portraits, and Murillo's mellowed softness, and Vinci's sublimity in his "Last Supper," and Teniers' transparency, and Nicholas Poussin's "Paradise" and "Deluge," and Snyder's magnificent "Stag-hunt," and Rembrandt's lively imagination, and Wilson's natural loveliness, and Reynolds' expression, and Gainsborough's exquisite "Cottage-girl," and West's striking picture of "Death on the Pale Horse," and Blake's terrible and ghastly

embodiments, and Michael Angelo's superhuman vastness of thought, and Titian's unrivalled colouring?

And in sculpture, is the eye dimmed by gazing on the fair form of Venus just issuing from the bath with her beautiful countenance expressive of soft voluptuousness—and the enchanting statue of Niobe with its deep despair and agonizing sorrow—and the Apollo's magnificence—and the Juno with lips sweet as a rose-bud—and the Minerva, with head uplifted in serene pensiveness to heaven—and the Laocoon, of which Pliny speaks in terms of the highest eulogium, and which amid its sufferings, breathes out such quiet loveliness as to still the pulsations of the heart—and the Dying Gladiator, with its broken hopes and solemn gloom depicted so truly—and Hercules resting for awhile after having plucked the golden apples in rich Hesperian gardens—and Polyctetus' famous Flora, with her delicate drapery—and Actæon defending himself against his dogs—and Myro's celebrated Discobulus?—and in later times is it wearying to behold Bacon's classical Narcissus gazing at the semblance of his own fair form in the deep flowing waters, and wishing to gaze for ever—and Bailey's dreamy slumber in his "Sleeping Nymph," and his ideal of exquisite grace and holy chastity in his "Eve at the Fountain," so full of delicate touches—and Behn's eloquent persuasiveness and anxious desire in his Cupid and the Doves—and Canova's hallowed devotedness of woman and careless indifference of man in his Venus and Adonis—and the repentance seen in the sunken eye of his Magdalene, as if she had forsaken the world for ever, and knew nothing but the name of her God—and the muscular sinew and heroic firmness of his Ajax,

and the bland sweetness of his Graces, and the mild complacency of his Paris, and the innocent charms of the Infant John, and the manliness and fond beguilement displayed in Mars and Venus, and the soft tenderness and playful affection of Psyche and Cupid—and Chantrey's Resignation, with eye turned upward to the clear bright sky, and the giving up the human will to the divine, and the reposing on the bosom of the Supreme—and Flaxman's Mercury and Pandora—the one so light and airy, and the other so perfect in feminine beauty—and Sievier's blushing Musidora about to bathe in the limpid stream—and Westmacott's enchanting Psyche? The oftener we gaze, the deeper our admiration; beauties come out which were unseen before, and associations cling around them—associations weave their unfading chaplet. Perhaps beheld amid the luxuriant loveliness of the southern landscape, and beneath the purple and golden light of the southern sky, they become the divinity of the scene; they breathe over the spot a deep, hushed stillness, and the charming shapes and forms of creation become in after times woven with the sculptured marble, and we cannot look on the one without recalling the other. Thus we never tire; thus possession does not necessarily cloy; and thus will these noble works of art ever put on a sweeter grace, and exert a more impassioned influence.

And in music, do the romantic beauty of Mozart's *Zauberflöte*, and the spirit-stirring out-pouring of his *Don Giovanni*, and the solemnity of his *Requiem*, lose any of their power by too frequently rolling their divine sounds on the ear?—and do we ever tire with hearing Arne's sweet melodies and his fine *Artaxerxes*, and Beethoven's gigantic conceptions uttering their

storm-like harmonies, and his ravishing strains of beauty, and his bursts of tremendous passion, and his chastened accents of sorrow—and Weber's richness in Oberon, with its strange, unearthly harmony, and the mournful simplicity of his last waltz—and Rossini's Italian airs, and Mendelssohn's sweeping majesty, and Bach's immortal strains, and Crotch's exquisite Palestine, and Glück's "Alceste," and Anselm Faidit's thrilling love-songs, and Christopher Tye's fine anthem, "I will exalt thee, O Lord," and Bird's "Non nobis Domine," and Gibbon's solemn combinations, and Cavalli's bold expression, and Cesti's graceful "Cara e dolce Libertà," and Salvator Rosa's wild utterances of minstrelsy, resembling the deep gloom of his paintings—and Purcell's "Te Deum," second only to Handel's, and his elegant "Tell me why, my charming fair"—and Corelli's pastoral sweetness, and Tartini's impassioned Sonatas, and Perez's pure southern intonations, and Boyce's pathetic "By the waters of Babylon," and his chaste duet, "Together let us range the fields"—and Danby's "Fairest flowers," and Cooke's "As now the shade of eve," and Webbe's "Swiftly o'er the mountain's brow," and Callcott's unrivalled "O snatch me from these tempestuous scenes"—and Haydn's immortal canzonets, and his "Creation," so picturesque of beauty and loveliness, with music lively as a lark, yet majestic as the surging of the billowy ocean—and Handel's stupendous choruses, and his magnificent "Dead March," and his angelic might and angelic power?

And in literature, will the melodious line of Izaak Walton and Goldsmith become less soft and less beautiful? And are we ever satiated with Cædmon's "Fall of Man," and Chaucer's "Canterbury Tales," and Herbert's

holy hymns, and Herrick's simple ditties, and Shakespeare's magnificent music, and Sir Philip Sidney's gentle tones, as of Arcadian rills, and Donne's vigorous and penetrating glance, and Giles Fletcher's hallowed theme, and Wither's spiritual emblems, and Browne's sweet pastorals, and Camden's antiquarian research, and Overbury's flowery scenes, and Jeremy Taylor's richness of thought and profuseness of imagery, and Drummond's chaste love sonnets, chanted far away in the north, and Cowley's lively essays and quiet contentment on the banks of Thames, and Milton's sublimity and oppressive grandeur, and Dryden's stately verse, and Nathaniel Lee's deep gush of tempest-sounds, and Evelyn's thoughts on forest trees, and Barrow's fulness, and Baxter's holiness, and Henry More's quaint but expressive conceptions, and Clarendon's renowned History, and Hale's pleasant tracts, and Locke's metaphysical inquiries, and Addison's graceful writings, and Pope's brilliant satire, and Swift's biting language, and Parnell's charming Hermit, and Somerville's Chase, and Steele's humorous and masterly delineations, and Defoe's wondrous tale, and Mandeville's graphic sketches, and Berkeley's high-spun idealisms, and Blair's masculine energy, and Johnson's majestic periods, and Collins' inimitable "Ode to the Passions," and Lyttleton's tender monody on the death of his wife, and Gray's exquisite "Elegy" and storm-like Pindaric sweep, and Mason's classical idioms, and Langhorne's amiable lines and translation of Plutarch's Lives, and Blackstone's immortal Commentaries on his country's laws, and M'Pherson's wild mountain-strains, and Chatterton's songs of days gone by, and Falconer's sea descriptions, and Bruce's delightful pæan to the early spring,

and Logan's long-remembered welcome to the cuckoo, and Warton's monument of English poetry, and Beattie's embodiment of his youthful aspirations and feelings in his charming "Minstrel," and Smart's hymn of David, and Barnard's affecting ballad of Auld Robin Gray, and Gibbon's splendid diction and extensive learning, and Sterne's pathos and moving pity, and Adam Smith's great work on the Wealth of Nations, and Warburton's paradoxes and dogmas, and Lowth's beautiful Hebrew melodies, and Watts' Songs for Childhood, and Burke's exuberant fancy and dazzling paintings, and Chatham's magnificent oratory, and Canning's elegant speeches, and Beckford's fine orientalism, and Hannah More's moral sentiments, and Roscoe's "Life of Lorenzo de Medici," and Mackintosh's clear, silvery argument, and Hallam's Constitutional History, and Alison's mellifluous thoughts on Taste, and Chalmers' bursts of eloquence, and Carlyle's massive and colossal works, and Brougham's sarcasms, and Jeffrey, and Macaulay, and Gilfillan's powerful criticisms?—do these cloy?—are they not as redolent with beauty, and sweetness, and grandeur, and sublimity as when first we turned their page?

The oftener we con over the fourth Georgic, with its hum of bees, its fresh green leaves, its clear bright rills, its transparent pools, edged with moss, its serene summer sky, its daffodils and hyacinths, its shady palms, and stately oleasters, and plane-trees, ministering their umbrage to the drinkers; its willows and ozers shadowing themselves in the murmuring stream; its insects which "float amid the liquid noon," its woodpeckers and other birds, its picture of the old Corycian, equalling in his contentment the wealth of kings, and plucking the ripened fruits, and chiding the delaying zephyrs, and

its exquisite story of Eurydice, the more sweetly does it beam with golden light and scent with delicious odour; and the sublimity of Æschylus becomes more intense and terrific, and the deep pathos of Euripides more subtle, and the thunders of Demosthenes more sonorous and crashing, and the magnificence of Lucretius more bright and glorious, and the words of the stately Tacitus more pregnant with meaning, and the gracefulness of Sophocles more delicate, and the wild majesty of Homer more lofty and harmonious, and the symmetry of Cicero more perfect, and the flowers of Horace more sunny and lovely, at every fresh perusal of their works; and Pindar's lines sparkle, and Anacreon's glitter, and Apuleius's glow ever sweetly. Does the possession of them eclipse their glory?—rather, does it not kindle in them a deeper and a richer beauty, and give a more empurpled tint to their several labours?—and when cast down and slighted by your fellow-men, do they not win you to them—win you from dulness and gloom to sunshine and everlasting peace?—win you from doubt and distress to the music-land of heaven? Possession cloy!—we know not what it means.

And the affections, do they cloy? When holy, never. The fond youth who, in his moments of hallowed love, paints the future home of his blessedness with all its tender endearments and delicious sweets, shall find in after life the delightful reality; he does not dream in vain; he cannot picture a happiness too great, or a bliss too sweet: he shall sit in that quiet home, and his children shall be about him, and the object of his holiest love shall talk in melodies beautiful as those accents that erst were heard in Paradise; the reality will shame

the fairy hope; it will be more luscious and more heavenly. What! does the soft prattle of your babe ever weary?—does its blue sparkling eye of confiding truth ever tire?—does its reposing affection ever annoy?—are they not more precious every hour? Does the possession of that child cloy?—and is the trustful tenderness of thy wife less pleasing and less grateful, her anxiety to promote your comfort, her fond devotedness to you, and you alone, her daily self-sacrifices to cheer and lead you on your path, her inviolate faith, less dear and invaluable than when in the morn of manhood you promised love, and honour, and protection for ever?

That these pall on the taste at seasons is no real objection, since this dissatisfaction is not consequent on possession, but on the state of our minds. There are seasons when we are so debilitated and so worn-out, that we become apathetic to everything, and among other things, to those dearest to our hearts; but surely we are not so regardless of the truth as to assert that this is the sequence to possession, and not the natural effects of our fallen condition. Possession does not necessarily cloy; the apathy proceeds from ourselves, and did we not possess those beloved objects, we should feel precisely the same; but when once the soul is buoyant again, we return with a deeper love and tenderer regard to those whose lives are linked so closely and inviolably with our own.

But the wise man looked on all things beneath the sun, and found them to be but “vanity and vexation of spirit.” True. But he sought for that which cannot be found in earthly objects: he omitted the grand principle of love to God; he tried all mundane joys apart from this vital energy; he was without Jehovah; he



knew him not; the pleasures of this sublunary state were considered only in themselves, unallied with the great moving influence. These could not satisfy man's soul; that soul rose higher; all things faded, and perished, and were forgotten; he had no sublime creed, and hence the recorded sentence, "vanity and vexation." His design was to lead humanity to the Everlasting; and in this light all is changed: instead of passing away, we are renewed; instead of dying, we live; in the vast "conflux of eternity," everything is invested with dignity and grace. Once it was thought love was limited to this narrow scene; but now we know it stretches far beyond; without Jesus, all our gratifications are vain, but in him they become lasting sweets; there is no decay; we progress onwards; we learn daily some wondrous lesson. With the Christian, therefore, it ill accords to believe in the opinion we have been combating; he is under a different government; the rainbow is around the throne, and in its lovely colours we read the fact that possession does not necessarily cloy.

Our poet next sings a song of eventide and early dawn :—

Evening and Morning—those two ancient names  
So linked with childish wonder, when with arm  
Fast wound about the neck of one we loved,  
Oft questioning, we heard Creation's tale—  
Evening and morning ever brought to me  
Strange joy; the birth and funeral of light,  
Whether in clear, unclouded majesty  
The large sun poured his effluence abroad,  
Or the grey clouds rolled silently along,  
Dropping their doubtful tokens as they passed;  
Whether above the hills intensely glowed  
Bright lines of parting glory in the west,  
Or from the veil of faintly-reddened mist  
The darkness slow descended on the earth;

The passing to a state of things all new—  
 New fears and new enjoyments. This was all  
 Food for my seeking spirit ; I would stand  
 Upon the jutting hills that overlook  
 Our level moor, and watch the daylight fade  
 Along the prospect : now behind the leaves  
 The golden twinkles of the westering sun  
 Deepened to richest crimson ; now from out  
 The solemn beech-grove, through the natural aisles  
 Of pillared trunks, the glory in the west  
 Showed like the brightly burning Shechinah  
 Seen in old times above the mercy-seat  
 Between the folded wings of cherubim.  
 I loved to wander with the evening star  
 Heading my way, till from the palest speck  
 Of virgin silver, evermore lit up  
 With radiance, as by spirits ministered,  
 She seemed a living pool of golden light :  
 I loved to learn the strange array of shapes  
 That pass along the circle of the year ;  
 Some, for the love of ancient lore, I kept ;  
 And they would call into my fancy's eye  
 Chaldean beacons, over the drear sand  
 Seen faintly from the thick-towered Babylon,  
 Against the sunset—shepherds in the field,  
 Watching their flocks by night—or shapes of men  
 And high-necked camels, passing leisurely  
 Along the starred horizon, where the spice  
 Swims in the air, in Araby the Blest ;  
 And some, as Fancy led, I figured forth,  
 Misliking their old names—one circlet bright,  
 Gladdens me often, near the Northern Wain,  
 Which, with a childish playfulness of choice  
 That hath not past away, I loved to call  
 The crown of glory, by the righteous Judge,  
 Against the day of his appearing, laid  
 In store for him who fought the fight of faith.

The beauty of the strain steals over us ; memories  
 arise, clad in a soft, golden light ; once again we are  
 seated in the snug parlour, and it is the still and quiet  
 hour of evening ; the blinds are drawn, and the shutters  
 closed, and the fire stirred ; the taper is brought in ;  
 our mother opens the big Bible at creation's tale—

she reads! we listen intently; our little eyes glisten with delight: we arise, we clamber up the knees of that beloved one, and throw our arms around her neck: tenderly she looks down on us; tenderly we look up to her. Reader, rememberest thou a similar scene?—if so, think thereon, and heed not if it makes thee “play the woman.”

And when we grew older, how soothing it was to wander up some hill, watching the evening star: the pensive feelings of that hour return upon us. We wondered what could make it shine so brightly, yet influence us to so much melancholy; and they told us that it was a better land than ours, and that its fields yielded the amaranth and wild olive, and that its pure and unfallen beings sang hymns of liquid praise. Then would imaginings come of their home's sweet joys and their home's sweet charms; and sometimes, too, we fancied that a strain of that immortal song caught our ears, and we would walk faster and listen; but it was the note of the wood pigeon, or the plaintive warblings of the nightingale; and when we went to rest, we thought of that star, and it seemed begirt with mystery; waking or sleeping, it filled all our mind.

How many there are who love the remaining crosses of our native land! How sweet, when entering a secluded and quiet village, to behold a fine old cross standing upon a grassy mound, the emblem of our holy faith; we scarce know of any sight more pleasing. There is a solitariness and loneliness about such mouldering pillars, that while they remind us of our blessed religion, forget not also to teach us the lesson of earthly decay. To the past they belong, and to the past they carry us back; they breathe into the soul the pensive

music of other years: we mingle with our forefathers, with those who once sat in yonder school-house, who worshipped within those grey walls, and knelt at that sacred altar to receive the memorials of Christ's death and Christ's resurrection, and who now sleep in that silent ground; and we are sad "because they are not."

Methinks I could have borne to live my days  
When by the path-way side, and in the dells,  
By shading resting-place, or hollow bank,  
Where curved the streamlet, or on peeping rock,  
Rose sweetly to the traveller's humble eye  
The Cross in every corner of our land;  
When from the wooded valleys, morn and eve,  
Past the low murmur of the angel-bell;  
Methinks I could have led a peaceful life  
Daily beneath the triple-vaulted roof,  
Chanting glad matins, and amidst the glow  
Of mellow evening towards the village tower  
Pacing my humble way.

There is something very beautiful in the story of Alford's early love; it has a sweetness and a freshness which continually pleases, a purity and a grace which ever delights. "All men," it is said by Emerson, "feel interested in a lover;" and when that lover is a poet, and touches the harp's melodious strings, one cannot choose but listen:—

Gentlest girl,  
Thou wert a bright creation of my thought  
In earliest childhood; and my seeking soul  
Wandered ill-satisfied, till one blest day  
Thine image passed athwart it: thou wert then  
A young and happy child, sprightly as life,  
Yet not so bright or beautiful as that  
Mine inward vision; but a whispering voice  
Said softly—This is she whom thou didst choose;  
And thenceforth ever, through the morn of life,  
Thou wert my playmate—thou my only joy;  
Thou my chief sorrow when I saw thee not;  
And when my daily consciousness of life  
Was born and died, thy name the last went up;

Thy name the first, before our Heavenly Guide,  
For favour and protection. All the flowers  
Whose buds I cherished, and in summer heats  
Fed with mock showers, and proudly showed their bloom,  
For thee I reared, because all beautiful  
And gentle things reminded me of thee :  
Yea, and the morning, and the rise of sun,  
And fall of evening, and the starry host,  
If aught I loved, I loved because thy name  
Sounded about me when I looked on them.

A sweet reminiscence this of faithful love—a gem gained from the beautiful Eden!—it seems surrounded by the delicious breath of paradise. This affection creates anew the world; the woods waving in the breeze become vocal; the streams pouring along their limpid waters whisper as with a song; the flowers, casting upwards their odoriferous perfumes, murmur as with a silver strain; the mountains piercing the deep blue heavens with their “snow-capped” summits, and on which the sun pours down its rays, making them glow as if an emerald or an amethyst burned, sound as with a holy hymn; and the vast rolling ocean, bellowing beneath the twinkling stars and lashing the sea-rocks and the shore, gush as with an everlasting anthem. Man awakens to a new being—enters into a new life; the imagination sees in all created things some semblance to the object of its regard; a passion has taken possession of his spirit, and sways it with a mighty energy; within its grasp he is all weakness, and yet all powerful—he is a subject, and yet a king; it is a higher state of existence; he is born anew from the nether world; he is exalted above the earth, and yet he loves the earth with a fonder love than heretofore—for once he feels himself the lord of the universe. Everything has a significancy—all is symbolical; his

thoughts, which were formerly confined to some narrow spot, now burst their fetters, and expatiate over the whole scene of vitality. "The height is gained, the mist has fallen; he stands as in a blooming landscape girt by immensity—a purer sunshine has illuminated all his conceptions;" they are refined and ennobled; his pristine dignity is restored; soul meets soul; and in some mysterious commingling they love for ever. There is an inviolate and divine oneness, diviner than the Nucta chasing away Egyptian plague, or the flowery offering of the Maldivians to the sovereign of ocean, or the floating radiance of the maiden's hope seen oftentimes on the Ganges. How it comes to pass, we know not; how it begins, we cannot discover; it must remain unravelled; it is not of time, it is of eternity: our sacrifices become purest delights; our afflictions, holiest joys; it is a theriac against the injuries and scoffs of the world—a crucible in which the very dregs of bitterness are changed into the nectar of the gods.

Another extract, and we close our notice of this beautiful poem:—

We have been dwellers in a lovely land,  
A land of lavish lights and floating shades,  
And broad green flats, bordered by woody capes  
That lessen ever as they stretch away  
Into the distance blue—a land of hills,  
Cloud-gathering ranges, on whose ancient breast  
The morning mists repose, each autumn tide  
Deep purple with the heath-bloom, from whose brow  
We might behold the crimson sun go down  
Behind the barrier of the western sea;  
A land of beautiful and stately fanes,  
Aerial temples, most magnificent,  
Rising with clusters of rich pinnacles  
And fretted battlements; a land of towers,  
Where sleeps the music of deep-voiced bells,

Save when in holiday time the joyous air  
Ebbs to the welling sound ; and Sabbath morn,  
When from a choir of hill-side villages  
The peaceful invitation churchward chimes.  
So were our souls brought up to love this earth  
And feed on natural beauty ; and the light  
Of our own sunsets, and the mountains blue  
That girt around our home, were very parts  
Of our young being—linked with all we knew—  
Centres of interest for undying thoughts  
And themes of mindful converse. Happy they  
Who, in the fresh and dawning time of youth,  
Have dwelt in such a land, tuning their souls  
To the deep melodies of Nature's laws,  
Heard in the after-time of riper thought,  
Reflective on past seasons of delight.

Yes, this is indeed a lovely land ; a land of groves and gardens ; a land of hills and dales ; a land of running brooks and wide curving rivers ; a land of the butterfly and bee ; a land of lordly mansions and princely castles ; a land of secluded villages and bustling towns ; a land of the beautiful church and the magnificent cathedral ; a land of Sabbath bells and soft eventides ; a land of religious freedom and religious truth ! The woodbine cottage, and the ruddy child, and the low, sweet parsonage, and the wild heaths and purple mountains, and the gushing torrents, and the dark, deep lakes, and the romantic ruins of a former age, are ours, and belong for ever to the land we love.

Man must gaze alone on the vast universe ; he must be its presiding genius ; he must throw around it every colour and every tinge of his inward mind ; he must shape and form it to the thoughts of his own spirit—the priest at creation's altar. Symbolical, too, of the fair majesty of the Eternal—what grandeur it puts on ! what sublimity ! what serenity ! what quiet ! what fresh

and blushing loveliness! and how sweet its music—sweet, yet having the roll of thunders! All soul to comprehend it fully—to realize it in all its grace, and truth, and meaning!

Perhaps some of the finest descriptions we have, are those which depict the calmness of universal nature amid the confusion and tumult of man. Billow and surge and roll as he may, still the golden beauty of the morning, and the silver loveliness of the evening, spread themselves over the earth. There may be hurry and noise amongst us, yet creation is one unruffled quietude; no sound is emitted but the sound of peace; no voice but the voice of birds, and trees, and rills; no language but the language of soft, hushed eloquence. Strange this and marvellous! All is serene above and around; the stars shine out as before, and the moon glimmers in the ocean.

This striking fact painters and poets have seized. How sweet and spring-scented, for instance, are the last few lines of the second book of the *Æneid*, which show us the morning star rising above Mount Ida: the din and bloodshed and flames have passed—the Trojan city is in ruins—the dark night is rolling backwards—dawn streaks the horizon—the dimness fades away—the sun veers upwards, and the hill-tops are golden with his beams. There is relief; man feels it. The break of day, as calm and as silent as ever: it takes no note of a fallen empire: no, it is as fresh and unruffled as when the holy pair erst stood, and lowly bending, hymned their welcome. All so still, all so quiet. The light comes down as usual; the valleys stand out in the bright rays; the forests are radiant with beauty; the hare



starts in the thicket as before; the lion roars in the desert, the dove coos in the copse; nature is the same; Priam's imperial throne how darkened!

Ever thus, creation changes and yet changes not; the snow-drop comes out, blooms, and dies; still the sweet, modest floweret lives; it has breathed its consolation into the heart, it budded not forth for nothing; amid dark, drear winter it unfolded its white petals in silence, but not in vain:—wintry sleet came down, and wintry winds swept by, but they bore not away its beauty. The soul took the emblem; it was a symbol; it has passed away, but in man's spirit it exists; there it has an immortality; tumult was hovering, and night ready to cover as with a huge thunderous cloud, and yet it sprang up and blossomed, as if no harm or danger was near.

This quietude of nature is a semblance of the eternal rest; it whispers to us of the better land. What mysteries entwine this beautiful earth! They speak to our heart; they sing a holy song of the coming paradise; yet its stillness is its most exquisite music.

Our love of this softness and tranquillity in creation, is linked with a higher principle than we at first perceive; it is the doctrine of rest and energy in the future abode. We may behold this idea worked out in the sculptured marble of the ancient world; so exquisitely chiselled it is, that whilst gazing on the personification of almighty power or superhuman agony, we feel a stillness breathing itself over the soul. There is a serene beauty in each feature; a soothing quietude: those ancient men felt that rest was the emblem of the celestial realm; nature deepened this feeling. Amid the stormy scenes of life would they oftentimes look back

on the days of infancy, when as open-hearted babes they played beneath the vine, and gathered the orange-blossom, and narcissus, and anemone, or when they nestled themselves in the fond bosoms of their mothers: it was rest then, and lively activity. And oftentimes, too, would they, when casting a glance into the dread unknown, deem that it would be something like the time of childhood and the days of youth; that over all would reign a delicious and undisturbed repose. Rest to men, storm-beaten, weather-beaten men, would be the elysium of their dreams, the Arcadia of their fondest hopes. And the serene peacefulness of their eventides would confirm the anticipation. At those seasons, every care and every anxiety was laid aside, and they sat with their own beloved ones under the spreading branches of some majestic tree. Rest then would be associated with all their ideas of happiness and unsullied bliss: and we find this to be true; for when their mighty spirits arose, they gave the expression of this fact in their immortal works of art.

The heathen philosophers, who taught that the soul was a particle of the Divinity, and that at death it would return, and become again linked to the Supreme, had this idea of rest at bottom. There was a sublime truth in their doctrines; once with the Deity, and there would be peace profound as the blue of heaven. This union with the Creator was the perfection of happiness. As He was beyond all change and decay, so the soul, when joined again to Him would likewise be without change and without decay. They felt that there could be no lasting bliss apart from God; and their hearts told them that in the re-union of the spirit with him, there could alone be unruffled and imperishable joy. Those evening

hours in which they meditated in the deep gloom of some umbrageous forest, revealed to them that quietude was the distinguishing feature in the future world. Once and again they felt a principle within which threw a sweet and chastened beauty over the events of life, and over the visible creation: a principle which shaped every tumultuous chaos, and moulded every stormy passion to order and gracefulness; a principle which beamed on the throbbing soul a soft alabaster light, and soothed and subdued many of its evil desires. From whence came this principle, they could not tell; suffice for us to know, that it often steered them onwards through the tempestuous ocean to the haven of everlasting rest. Ah! reader, have you never watched the setting sun from the home of childhood, and when its departing glories have calmed your bosom, and its fine crimson and golden colouring threw something of their tinge on the flowers beneath your feet, and when, letting your fancy loose, you have called to remembrance the beloved face of parent, and of kinsman, and of friend, and losing yourself among the hallowed associations of the past, and mingling in bygone years, have you not felt a peace and a quietude, deep as the grey of yonder sky, yet profound as the magnificent roll of existence? Then was shadowed forth the eternal rest; and these men, these ancient men, would oftentimes experience the same enchanting influence; and they sang a song of the nether paradise, and its delicious music lingers yet on the ear.

Even their fables discover the same principle. We select one—the story of Psyche and Cupid: how exquisitely it reveals the scriptural fact that the coming heaven consists in love and rest. This doctrine per-

vades the whole of this sweet tale: how it unfolds the soul's affection for something higher, and loftier, and purer than aught on earth; how it exhibits the spirit's attachment to the everlasting love! Psyche catches a glimpse of the perfect beauty, and she loves once and for ever: but she is earthly, and hence she doubts and mistrusts. The fine sunny radiance which before streamed from heaven has become darkened: to regain that light, there must be struggles, deep, mighty struggles; there must be faith. Ah! these ancient men knew something of the coming revelation: by struggles, by faith, by the help of invisible but Almighty powers, by encouragement from above, by starlight in shades, and sunlight in gloom, the soul triumphs. Psyche wins her first and fondest Cupid; they are for ever united; the alliance is immaculate; their home is garlanded by the celestial flowers, and those flowers are love and rest. Is there nothing taught here? Is there not a divine breathing, and a divine expression? Union with the God of love, what means it? Everlasting intimacy, and endearment, and communion with the source of all tenderness, what does it tell? Is there here no true shadowing of the future; no breaking in of unseen reality; no bursting forth of immortal verity?

Not only do we discern this principle in the work of sculptor, of poet, and of philosopher, but we think it may be discovered in those vast piles which rear their pinnacles, and minarets, and cupolas to the fair heavens: these breathe out a tranquil beauty; there seems to be a deep, soft, spiritual power about them; the very air around them is hushed to stillness; when we gaze on their architectural symmetry, we are enchained; we

speak not; words are too grating, they disturb too much the unruffled quietude. It is the same with the simple kirk and the magnificent cathedral: we feel that they possess a potent power; that power fetters the soul, and yet leaves it freer than before; we are calmed—it is as if we stood in the presence of a greater intellect; we are awed; and it is even so, that stately fane was the conception and the design of the immortal mind. When it first glanced across the spirit, the architect was gladdened, and he cherished the idea as fondly as a mother cherisheth her first-born. Well may it be so vital with expression, so vocal with language; it is the creation of the soul; it formed, and shaped, and moulded it into grace, and then gave it substance and reality. We can touch, we can handle it: there it stands—a monument of what man can do; it is thought embodied; it is the imagination clothed. Is it any wonder, then, that we are moved and stirred by its influence? All these glorious buildings are significant of peace; one almost feels solitary and alone whilst admiring their beauty, so sweet is the music they whisper.

The Grecian temples, wherever they stand, seem to spread a tranquil softness over creation; there is a solitude wherever they uprear their graceful columns. They may, indeed, be surrounded by worshippers, but there is yet a sensible stillness; silence is the presiding divinity: if there are sounds, they are lost in the supreme sense of quietude. That polished temple, with its clear, serene sky overhead, and its overhanging palms, is rest sculptured.

Man's mightiest works are instinct with this doctrine: it matters not whether it be poetry or architecture,

painting or sculpture, rest is the characteristic of each and all. Look at Martin's "Deluge;" and is it not true that, amid the tremendous dashing of the rain, and the surging and billowing of the waters, and the cries of infants, and the shrieks of men and women, and the awful confusion of the scene, silence is felt to be the pervading element. One cannot well explain how, among things so opposite, there should issue such calmness; but it is no less real because undivined. Were the chaos sketched by a master-hand, even from this, with all its jarring noises, and discordant sounds, and crashing thunders, would there breathe forth a stillness and a tranquil quietude.

Why labour we so earnestly in our youth and manhood? why exhaust we our strength and energy in the heyday of our existence? why the sunken eye? why the enfeebled frame? why the pallid cheek? Is it not that when life's shadows deepen, the evening of our days may be passed in the enjoyment of rest? It is not for the gold-god that we toil; no, not for that, not for that! We long after rest; we pray for rest. But remember, it is an active rest; a rest on which may beam affection and constant love. Rest is grateful after hardship; rest is sweet after the beating and raging of the elements; rest is delicious after years of sufferings; and when man looks on the fair and beautiful creation, he feels that this, too, is the bliss of heaven.

Ambition may stir the breast of many, and it may seem to be the ruling principle in their struggle for pre-eminence and wealth; but even this is kept alive by the idea of rest. Behind those honours, and far more honourable, arises an abode of peace and con-

tentment. Here they would spend the remainder of their days. It is not rank, it is not station that they want so much; it is this. Fancy ever calleth up some rural retirement to nerve and sinew the aspiring spirit in his conflict with the world. Have you ever marked the pure blue ether that often gleams through some broken cloud? It is an emblem of the rest he desires.

We have lain in the deep flowery grass which skirted a sylvan stream, and whilst listening to its murmuring waters, and gazing upwards with half-closed eye, have we been wafted as in a sweet and pleasant dream to the land where there is an unruffled calm. Why do we recollect such moments with delight? It is that they spoke to us of rest.

And we may, indeed, trace some knowledge thus gathered from the outward universe, in every bosom. The spirit culleth all the beautiful things of earth, and out of them doth it take such as are in sweet accordance with its own bright anticipation of the future world. Ah, and it is a creation bathed in love and quietude. There may the feet stray in orange-groves; there the almond-tree buds, and the cassia flowers, and the clove and basil pour forth their perfumes on every passing breeze; there the cedar, and the pine, and the fir adorn its vales, and the sun looks gloriously down upon its pure and holy inhabitants. Rest is there, and love: rest and love: all is one enchanting stillness—one enchanting silence. There is love, which signifies activity; rest, which signifies happiness: it is a fair and hallowed spot; and this expression of poet, and of painter, and of sculptor is but a shadow of its eternal softness and eternal beauty.

Seest thou a soul struggling after a pleasant home,

embowered in shady grove, and trellised with the woodbine, and rose, and sweet-pea, and beaming within with all the tenderness of faithful love; knowest thou that it is but pursuing the object of existence, and obeying the great principle of its being? Love and rest: who would not live and die for these?

Stillness is the perfection of human nature: in that unruffled silence there is the exercise of every faculty and every attribute.

In man's most blissful moments he is silent; in his holiest seasons he is still; in his most hallowed communion with those he loves he is without language; words fail him then: we need them not; there is a deeper expression than the softest intonations of the lips. See it in the sculptured marble, and the dark, dim cathedral pile, and the sketch of painter, and the creation of poet; see it, too, in our homes, when we kneel before the throne; see it in those eventides when we sit with those "whom God has given us," and watch the closing flower, the rising moon, the vesper star.

Among our author's minor productions there are many choice gems. There is much of Wordsworth's style and sentiment in the following:—

There is an ancient man, who dwells  
Without our parish bounds,  
Beyond the poplar avenue,  
Across two meadow-grounds :  
And whensoever our two small bells  
To church call merrily,  
Leaning upon our churchyard gate,  
This old man ye may see.  
He is a man of many thoughts,  
That long have found their rest,  
Each in its proper dwelling-place,  
Settled within his breast ;



A form erect, a stately brow,  
 A set and measured mien,  
 The satisfied, unroving look  
 Of one who much hath seen.

And once, when young in care of souls,  
 I watched a sick man's bed,  
 And willing half, and half ashamed,  
 Lingered, and nothing said;  
 That ancient man, in accents mild,  
 Removed my shame away.  
 "Listen!" he said; "the minister  
 Prepares to kneel and pray."

These lines of humble thankfulness  
 Will never meet his eye:  
 Unknown that old man means to live,  
 And unremembered die.  
 The forms of life have severed us;  
 But when that life shall end,  
 Fain would I hail that reverend man,  
 A father and a friend.

Several others of these shorter poems breathe the same chaste beauty and elegance of diction. There is one which we admire much: a storm is raging without, when a child addresses its widowed father, in sweet, gentle accents, with a request that she might go and shield her mother's grave from the hurrying blast, and the calm answer is such a striking contrast to the fear and perturbation of the child, that we almost feel a love for death and the tomb:—

Father, wake—the storm is loud,  
 The rain is falling fast;  
 Let me go to my mother's grave,  
 And screen it from the blast.  
 She cannot sleep, she will not rest,  
 The wind is roaring so;  
 We prayed that she might lie in peace—  
 My father, let us go!

Thy mother sleeps too firm a sleep  
 To heed the wind that blows;  
 There are angel-charms that hush the noise  
 From reaching her repose.

Her spirit, in dreams of the blessed land,  
Is sitting at Jesu's feet.  
Child, nestle thee in mine arms, and pray  
Our rest may be as sweet!

There are several beautiful sketches in the poem entitled "A Doubt," one of which we give:—

I know not how the right may be:  
But I have shed strange tears to see,  
Passing an unknown town at night,  
In some warm chamber, full of light,  
A mother and two children fair,  
Kneeling, with lifted hands, in prayer.

It is sweet to have looked upon such a scene, and sweeter the remembrance. To travel by an old mail-coach on a frosty winter's night—to enter a quiet village, with its few pale and glimmering oil lamps casting a sickly and feeble glare on passing objects—to hear the hoofing of the horses and the blast of the horn—to see the shadows of the outside passengers on the pavement, rendered distinct by the silver beams of the moon—to stay at the large ancient inn—to warm oneself at the blazing fire—then to start again, and while travelling onwards, to behold such a picture of maternal affection and hallowed piety, must be thrilling indeed!

This scene links itself with that peaceful hour in which we first gazed upon the Countess's Pillar: rememberest thou, O generous companion? We had rambled far along the banks of the Eamont, and had beheld the fine towers of Brougham Hall, and had looked upon many a rose-clustered parsonage and old ivied church, and had lain ourselves down to rest on the night of Saturday.

The glorious sun shone brightly eastward when we issued from a snug road-side inn, about three miles

from Penrith; it stood at a little distance from the path, and enclosed on either side with a sweet honeysuckle hedge: every object seemed to breathe all the spiritual beauty and quietude of the Sabbath; every sound of labour was hushed; the peasants had left the fields; the sky, save here and there dimpled with light fleecy clouds, was one wide hemisphere of blue: there was a soft tranquillity on flower, and leaf, and tree, and grassy mead. We wended onwards towards the church of St. Ninian, now stopping to gaze on the unruffled serenity of heaven, and now stooping to gather some lovely violet. On our right stretched far away Skiddaw and Saddleback; and on our left, the sheep were scattered on the refreshing turf.

We had not proceeded far ere the bells struck out with their soft, silvery melody; the wind ever and anon swept their enchanting music towards us; the past soon visioned itself, it came around the spirit like a dream; pleasant memories played before the fancy, and as each liquid peal stole out, a new scene of beauty came floating by; the bygone hours commingled with the present, and there were rich sounds of minstrelsy, and hallowed morns, and distant mountains, and invigorating gales, and pure blue heavens, and luxuriant trees, and million wild flowers, and holy thoughts.

After rambling some four miles or more, we got into the Kendal road, and soon came upon the Countess's Pillar. It is a plain monument, bearing the arms of the family by whom the stone was raised, and the following inscription:—"This pillar was erected in the year 1656, by Ann, Countess Dowager of Pembroke, &c., for a memorial of her last parting in this place with her good and pious mother, Margaret, Countess

Dowager of Cumberland, on the 2nd of April, 1616; in memory whereof she had left an annuity of 4*l.*, to be distributed to the poor of the parish of Brougham, every second day of April for ever, upon the stone table placed hard by. *Laus Deo!*" It stands on a bank to the right from Penrith, and is surrounded by an iron railing. It strikes one much when seen from the distance, but more so when we come near; there is a solitariness about the aged stone—a pensive loneliness; it seems to hallow every foot of ground; the road becomes from henceforth sacred; there is something woven around it even sweeter than song.

We sat down upon a grassy mound and gazed on the monument; it was a season peculiarly suited for thought: every cloud in the heavens had rolled away; all was one still and beautiful blue; the sun shone in glory, and threw the stone's shadow upon the solitary road; the wind came languidly on, and brought the delicious scent of the new-made hay; the corn was golden with light. We sat and mused: the pillar called up a thousand fancies; and the tinge of melancholy with which they were shaded, rendered them more pleasing to the mind. Two hundred years ago, and a mother and her child parted on this spot: what emotions swayed their bosoms we can scarcely divine at this far-off hour, but they were doubtless painful. The road was rugged then, and even less frequented than now; the dark fir may have lined its sides, and covered the distant hills; and who knows at what moment they separated?—it may have been a stormy night, when the howling winds shook the sky; but we think every wind would hush itself to rest at such a scene, and breathe its balmy breath on the sorrows of that hallowed season; whether

it was so or no, we cannot learn. We think we see them now: there they stand; the hand is grasped with tenderest love, the tear rolls silently down the cheek, the last kiss is given, the last look taken, and the child watches the retiring footsteps of the mother until she is out of sight; then turns away and weeps.

We have forbore to inquire into their history, if such exist, for it might dispel many of those associations which crowd around such a monument; its light might scatter imagination's thoughts: without it, and we may invest the pillar with what ideas we choose. There is a sweetness at times in uncertainty: just so with this. We would rather gaze upon its ancient stone, simple and plain as it is, without one record save that which it bears on its sides, than with the fullest and clearest knowledge; there is something left for the mind to fill up; "ample room and verge enough" for the fancy wherein to play.

It was the last parting. How often did the child recal the bitterness of that hour!—how often did she live it over again!—how often gaze upon that spot which witnessed so much sorrow, and that heaven which looked down so still and so beautifully serene upon their griefs! And here, even here, she came, after a lapse of forty years, and erected this solitary stone, to record what never had been forgotten. Oh! and how many have beheld this lonely monument with thrilling thoughts. Here the gentle Rogers was melted to a soft, pensive mood, and in after years he poured out a liquid melody in memory of that scene;—and Wordsworth, too, the intellectual Wordsworth, had hither come, and felt himself moved by unutterable emotions;—and many a youth with fiery ambition

glaring from the eye has paused, and better thoughts have taken hold upon him, and he has wished for the calm blessings of maternal love.

A "good and pious mother" — what hallowed memories in this—memories of Alfred, and Louis, and Cowper—memories of the ancient and the modern world—memories of touching sweetness and subduing power. "A good and pious mother:" it hath a liquid language entering into every feeling of the soul! We spoke of Louis. "Under the oak-trees of Vincennes, behold him sitting—his learned counsellors, Pierre de Fontaines and Geoffroy de Vellettes, near by—waiting rather to arbitrate than judge between those who came to his tribunal. How patiently he listens—how anxiously he examines all proofs—how kindly he points out the middle way, overlooked by both disputants, which will conduct to justice! Can we still wonder that such a man, in such times, was soon to become a saint in the estimation of men?" Thanks to thee, Blanche, for thy maternal care, and love, and blessing!

The scene has changed; prince and people have passed away: those forest-trees which looked so beautiful in the long summer's afternoon have mouldered in the dust, and all their blithe choristers have ceased their silver warblings; the clouds have departed, and the sweet jessamine and luxuriant vine have alike dropped into forgetfulness. We are beneath another sky, and stand on different ground. It is the autumn of 1737, and the winds sweep over this Austrian land, onwards to the mountains of Switzerland: it is the small village of Rohrau, fifteen leagues from Vienna. See how the setting sun throws its last gleams on yonder cottage; that cottage is the home of hallowed peace; within its

little parlour are gathered together the loved ones of parental affection; the father touches the harp's vibrating strings, and the mother sings to the issuing notes: there is a child there, gazing fondly into its mother's face; the sunset of the Sabbath-day puts on a more solemn grandeur—the twilight deepens, and yet the holy hymn ceases not; it increases in its magnificence of meaning; now and then a leaf rustles to the earth, first sounding against the latticed window. The father and the mother, and that child of whom we spoke, catch the pensive melodies of nature; the anthem rolls upwards; the leaves drop faster; the winds ever and anon gush loudly, then sink in "dying falls;" the purple and the grey colouring of the western sky fades into a duskier hue; the stars twinkle, then disappear, then twinkle out again. The music of that home arises in intenser beauty and deeper harmony; the heart is moved, and it throbs with immortality: that child throws itself upon its mother's bosom, and weeps wild tears of ecstasy. Mark that child, for he will thrill the world; and the time will come when the recollection of this scene will give a diviner grandeur to his everlasting bursts of song.

Nearly seventy years after this, enter Vienna, and in yon fair palace of Prince Lobkowitz, hearken to the issuing sounds, sweet as the nightingale's, yet magnificent as the roll of ocean: the room is large and spacious: fifteen hundred of the nobility and gentry of the Austrian capital are assembled; the orchestra is crowded with near two hundred performers; a dark swarthy man is borne in—he is placed in the midst of that illustrious company; the roof rings with plaudits and the tremendous swell of gushing music; the theme is creation's—the confusion of the elements jar and

crash; there is the bellowing of dim waters and loud thunders. "The earth is without form and void, and darkness is upon the face of the deep;" but anon, and there are rich symphonies and angelic acclamations, and "the new-created world" mingles in every outburst of praise. Tears glisten in the eye of that old man, and ah! he recalls, in this hour of his triumph, the little parlour, and the harp, and the Sabbath evening, and the face of parents, and the maternal affection which beamed on him so long ago, and he blesses his good and pious mother!

Such thoughts and such scenes came before us whilst sitting beneath the morning sun and looking upon that stone; and then we would wander to the abode of Ann, Countess of Pembroke, and picture the sports, and amusements, and lonely retirements of her youth: there was a pleasure of a pure and holy kind in such a reverie; the simple monument stood so solitary in the broad blaze of the noonday beams. Ah! and it was the record of one sorrowful hour; it spoke of a daughter's feelings—feelings which years could never deaden. There might be a want of order in our thoughts, but there was a silvery harmony in the spell; it might have been delusive, but it was one which tended to exalt and purify the spirit. How the good old Izaak Walton would have loved to have gazed upon this hallowed memento of a child's affection!

On this spot we could have lingered for hours; there was a divine sorcery binding us; the whole road became henceforth interesting. We can never think of its pathway over hill and through solitary dales and by the winding river, without a thrilling emotion of pensive delight; it is the lonely pillar that bestows the



fascinating charm; every bush, and tree, and rill, and cornfield, and grassy meadow, and wild lane, and hedge-row, becomes sacred; we would ever have it so. Ah! memories of earth's sweetest loveliness cling around them, and they come like blessings to the soul.

The sonnets of our poet are finely written: two "On Seeing our Family Vault," are nervous and beautiful. The one has all the solemnity and gloominess of death, the other catches the music of immortality; the former is a sad picture of the cold grave, the latter, scents of coming spring and budding flowers:—

This lodging is well chosen ;—for 'tis near  
The fitful sighing of those chesnut trees ;—  
And every Sabbath morning it can hear  
The swelling of the hymned melodies :  
And the low booming of the funeral bell  
Shall murmur through the dark and vaulted room,  
Waking its solemn echoes but to tell  
That one more soul is gathered to its home.  
There we shall lie beneath the trodden stone :  
Oh ! none can tell how dreamless and how deep  
Our peace will be—when the last earth is thrown—  
The last notes of the music fallen asleep—  
The mourners passed away—the tolling done—  
The last chink closed, and the long dark begun.

Could I for once be so in love with gloom  
As to leave off with cold mortality—  
To finish with the deep peace of the tomb,  
And the sealed darkness of the withering eye ?  
And could I look on thee, thou calm retreat,  
And never once think of the joyous morn,  
Which, bursting through the dark, our eyes shall greet  
With heavenly sunshine on the instant born ?  
O ! glorious time, when we shall wake at length  
After life's tempest under a clear sky,  
And count our band, and find with keenest joy  
None wanting—love preserved in all its strength ;—  
And with fresh beauty, hand in hand, shall rise,  
A link in the bright chain of ransomed families.

There is another on an evening in autumn, well deserving our notice:—

How soothing is that sound of far-off wheels  
Under the golden sheen of the harvest-moon :  
In the shade-chequered road it half reveals  
A homeward wending group, with heart in tune  
To thankful merriment ;—father and boy,  
And maiden with her gleanings on her head ;  
And the last wagon's rumble heard with joy  
In the kitchen with the ending-supper spread.  
But while I listening stand, the sound hath ceased ;  
And hark, from many voices lustily  
The harvest home, the prelude to the feast,  
In measured bursts is pealing loud and high ;  
Soon all is still again beneath the bright  
Full moon that guides me home this autumn night.

What an exquisite description of harvest-home is this! Dearly do we love this relic of our olden times; and there is something peculiarly sweet in sitting upon some mossy bank in a straggling lane, and listening to the merry laughter of the swains. The scene possesses all the loveliness of a dream: the old farm-house, with its high-thatched roof and shady trees; the great wagons laden with the golden corn; the rumbling of the heavy wheels; the colours flying on some May-pole; the bright countenances of master and men; and the calm beauty of the coming evening, form one of England's sweetest pictures.

One other sonnet, and we have done; it is addressed to his "own dear county," and recounts its many charming beauties; the most lovely features of our sea-girt isle are brought within the compass of fourteen lines. What stirrings of old it awakens! We seem again to traverse her sunny roads; to linger in her wild green lanes; to wander along her flowing streams; to recline on her romantic banks, and dream the hours away; to saunter through her shady dells; to walk through her rustic villages; to sit within her quiet church-yards; to gaze on tower and steeple, rising

skyward; to hear her silvery bells; to behold her peaceful rectories, and happy dwellings, and ancestral mansions, with their elms and rooks:—

My own dear country—thy remembrance comes  
Like softly-flowing music on my heart;  
With thy green sunny hills, and happy homes,  
And cots rose-bowered, bosomed in dells apart;  
The merry pealings of our village-bells  
Gush ever and anon upon mine ear;  
And is there not a far-off sound that tells  
Of many voiced laughter shrill and clear?  
Oh! were I now with thee—to sit and play  
Under the hawthorn on the slope o' the hill,  
As I was wont to do; or pluck all day  
The cowslip and the flaunting daffodil,  
Till shepherds whistled homeward, and the West  
Folded the large sun in her crimson breast.

Alford has increased our love of nature; his poems scent with all the freshness and beauty of an April day; his verse is as clear and deep as the melody which breaks in the air when spring awakes; his productions have invested the outward creation with a more exquisite grace than it heretofore possessed; so much have the intellect and the soul done for this planet, that “when the sun comes up in earliest summer’s dawn, flushing with his glorious hues the sweet opal regions of the eastern sky; when the mists of the valley float up at his warm approach in whiteness; when the greenness of woods and meadows, the quiet loveliness of flocks and herds, the glitter of streams, and the smoke of cottages, all send into the heart images of freshness and immortal beauty; when the ocean comes thundering with all his strength and splendour in the midst of such a scene; when noon broods over it in bright stillness; when evening creeps on with its coolness and its shadows, drawing after it

the glory of gorgeous sunsets; the sombre gloom of deep woods; the golden beaming of far and clear prospects; the feeling of quiet and rest accompanied by the floating odours of flowers, and the last hum of the bee; and when night builds the canopy of its stars, and showers its moonlight enchantment on the earth below—in all these changes the face of nature has become almost as speaking, as entrancing to the cultivated man as the face of woman itself; it is to him rich with all the colours of memory and poets. It brings with it wisdom and song, history and the sentiment of music and painting, from the pages of those who have seen these things before him, or perhaps with him, and which have peopled earth for him with the beings of the mind." And so hath the Spirit given to this wide world a language of deeper thought and holier feeling. And it is to such poets as the one who has formed the subject of this criticism, that we owe these richer harmonies and these richer glories.

## CARRINGTON.

"In truth, we are slow to condemn as useless any researches or discoveries of original and strong minds, even when we discern in them no bearing on any interest of mankind; for all truth is of a prolific nature, and has connexions not immediately perceived; and, it may be, that what we call vain speculations, may, at no distant period, link themselves with some new facts or theories, and guide a profound thinker to the most important results. The ancient mathematician, when absorbed in solitary thought, little imagined that his theorems, after the lapse of ages, were to be applied by the mind of Newton to the solution of the mysteries of the universe, and not only to guide the astronomer through the heavens, but the navigator through the pathless ocean. For ourselves, we incline to hope much from truths which are particularly decried as useless; for the noblest and most useful truth is of an abstract or universal nature; and yet the abstract, though susceptible of infinite application, is generally, as we know, opposed to the practical."

CHANNING.

THE subject of our present paper was born at Plymouth, in 1777, of respectable parentage. Nothing remarkable occurred in his life until he reached his sixteenth year, when he was apprenticed to Mr. Thomas Foot, a measurer: the pursuits of his profession, however, were unsuitable to his literary predilections. The love of poetry, as embodied in the beautiful creations of God, had taken possession of his soul, and when once under the dominion of that delightful passion, we feel a growing dislike to noise and bustle; it

leads her votaries to the contemplation of nature in all its loveliness and grandeur; it leads them to meditate amid its solitary haunts and quiet seclusions; every flower is rich with a thousand memories, every shrub with a thousand associations. Literature stamps an everlasting charm and an everlasting truth on those scenes which rise in simple majesty around us.

In the dockyard there could be little that was congenial; its noise was little suited to the spirit that had learned to love the creations of poet and of painter. He might, indeed, have dreamt of beautiful things while at his labours; he might, indeed, have depicted with his fancy the blushing scenery of nature colouring it with golden and with purple tints; he might, indeed, have listened to the sweet music of heaven and earth, but ever and anon the truth would come that he was far from these, and they far from him.

Each day, as it glided by, bore with its fading glories the entreaties of our poet for a change of situation: it was in vain he asked; the boon was refused. After some three years of hope and fear, he ran away. He had no sooner done this, than he felt the effects of his own rashness, for not having courage to go home, he seemed an outcast and an exile. In this emergency he entered on "shipboard," and soon after was present at the victory off Cape St. Vincent, on the 14th of February, 1797. Having written some verses on the occasion, the first he ever penned, they met the eye of his captain, who appreciated their merits, and became deeply interested in their author. Having learned his story, he promised to send him to his parents immediately on their arrival in England. The youthful bard soon obtained forgiveness, and was once more re-

instated in the home of infancy. He was now allowed to choose his own profession, and ere very long, became a public schoolmaster.

Seven years after this, we find him removed to Maidstone, in Kent. In 1805, he married, and continued to pursue his avocation with success until 1809, when he returned to Plymouth, at the earnest request of some friends, who were anxious to place their sons under his care: he remained here till within six months of his death: his duties allowed him little or no recreation. In 1820, he produced his "Banks of Tamar," which was well received; and four years afterwards he published "Dartmoor," with still greater success. Friends now gathered round him, and even royalty itself smiled. He continued from this time to write occasional pieces for magazines until disabled by sickness. In 1830, he relinquished his school and removed to Bath, where he died but a few months afterwards. His burial-place seems suited to his character: it lies in the secluded village of Combehay, somewhat more than three miles from his late residence, "deep sunk" in a romantic and sequestered vale.

Our author's finest poem is, unquestionably, "Dartmoor." It is marked by much truth and beauty, and its strain is lively and joyous; there are a few melancholy notes, a few pensive touches; its versification is in general harmonious, and its descriptions strong and characteristic; its imagery is correct, and its associations pleasant; its episodes are full of sweetness; it scents of the gorse and broom which grow on our heaths, and sounds with the murmuring of brooks and the dashing of the rushing torrent.

The commencement of the poem presents us with the following beautiful apostrophe:—

Lovely Devonia! land of flowers and songs!  
To thee the duteous lay. Thou hast a cloud  
For ever in thy sky—a breeze, a shower,  
For ever on thy meads;—yet where shall man,  
Pursuing Spring around the globe, refresh  
His eye with scenes more beauteous than adorn  
Thy fields of matchless verdure! Not the south—  
The glowing south—with all its azure skies,  
And aromatic groves, and fruits that melt  
At the rapt touch, and deep-hued flowers that light  
Their tints at zenith suns—has charms like thine,  
Though fresh the gale that ruffles thy wild seas,  
And wafts the frequent cloud. I own the power  
Of local sympathy, that o'er the fair  
Throws more divine allurement, and o'er all  
The great more grandeur; and my kindling muse,  
Fired by the universal passion, pours,  
Haply, a partial lay. Forgive the strain,  
Enamoured, for to man in every clime,  
The sweetest, dearest, noblest spot below,  
Is that which gives him birth; and long it wears  
A charm unbroken, and its honoured name,  
Hallowed by memory, is fondly breathed  
With his last lingering sigh.

And who is there amongst us who feels not the power of local sympathy? How beautiful and bright those hills up which we toiled in childhood; how thick they stand with sweet associations! how lovely those woodbine lanes along which our feet used to stray, and what remembrances entwine their green hedge-rows and shady trees! The very wild-flowers that trembled in the evening breeze seemed more exquisite than others. How quiet and calm the village we were accustomed to visit, with its straw-roofed cottages, low porches, and latticed panes, with its ancient church and ivied parsonage! There seems to be a deeper shade in



those yews that skirted the churchyard, and a more softened repose breathed over the lonely graves. And thus we ever cling to those streams, and walks, and flowers, and trees, and peaceful huts, and Elizabethan mansions we gazed on in bygone years: memory adorns them with a more than rainbow beauty.

The sky of Italy may be bright and sunny, but the sky which mantled over the place of our birth, and which witnessed our youthful sports, seems to us more sunny and more bright. Other lands may be graced with the narcissus and the orange-blossom, and may be breathed on by gentle winds and balmy gales, and there may be silvery whisperings in their woods; but that nook which beheld us laughing in the joyance of childhood seems to be graced with sweeter flowers and breathed on by more softened gales; and from out its woods comes a more silvery music. Other countries may be decked with high-crested mountains and deep dark lakes reflecting in their still waters the magnificent sunset and sunrise and the resplendent glory of the starry hosts; but there is a retreat which yields to us thoughts more stirring and feelings more throbbing than any of these.

We return to Dartmoor: —

“ In sunlight and in shade—  
Repose and storm,—wide waste ! I since have trod,  
Thy hill and dale magnificent. Again  
I seek thy solitudes profound, in this  
Thy hour of deep tranquillity, when rests  
The sunbeam on thee, and thy desert seems  
To sleep in the unwonted brightness—calm  
But stern : for, though the spirit of the spring  
Breathes on thee, to the charmer's whisper kind  
Thou listenest not, nor ever puttest on  
A robe of beauty, as the fields that bud  
And blossom near thee. Yet I love to tread

Thy central wastes when not a sound intrudes  
 Upon the ear, but rush of wing, or leap  
 Of the hoarse waterfall. And, oh, 'tis sweet  
 To list the music of thy torrent-streams;  
 For thou too hast thy minstrelsies for him  
 Who from their liberal mountain-urn delights  
 To trace thy waters, as from source to sea  
 They rush tumultuous."

There are times when the soft and voluptuous please not, when we seek the solitary region; the stern features of nature are then more suited to the soul; we love its severer beauties; the voice of waters amid the solemnity of seeming desolation is proper music, none other is desirable. The singing of the birds harmonizes not, the cooing of the dove is unwelcome; the whispering of trees, and hum of bees, and tinklings of the sheep-bell belong not to creation in its wilder domains. The silvery chime of the chapel-bell would be ungrateful; nothing but the torrent's hoarse and dashing sounds are in accordance. In such a spot, all solitary and alone, sublime thoughts will often pass over the spirit, and shake it as with a storm; a mightier power is disclosed, a more tremendous energy; the busy world is shut out, the transient affairs of mortals shrink into littleness; the immortal stands divested of its earthliness; we feel, as it were, a new being. With the vast sky above, and the wide waste below, the mind puts on its highest and loftiest attributes.

The following is very picturesque:—

"Fair is thy level landscape, England, fair  
 As ever nature formed! Away it sweeps,  
 A wide, a smiling prospect, gay with flowers,  
 And waving grass, and trees of amplest growth,  
 And sparkling rills, and rivers winding slow  
 Through all the smooth immense. Upon the eye  
 Arise the village and the village-spire,  
 The clustering hamlet, and the peaceful cot

Clasped by the woodbine, and the lordly dome,  
 Proud peering 'mid the stately oak and elm  
 Leaf-loving. Sweet the frequent lapse of brook,  
 The poetry of groves, the voice of bells,  
 From aged towers and labour's manly song  
 From cultured fields upswelling. Sweet the hues  
 Of all the fertile land; and when the sun  
 And shower alternate empire hold, how fresh,  
 How gay, how all-enchanting to the view,  
 Beheld at first, the broad champaign appears !

Nor is this less beautiful:—

“ Bird, bee, and butterfly—the favourite three  
 That meet us ever on our summer path !  
 And what, with all her forms and hues divine,  
 Would summer be without them ? Though the skies  
 Were blue, and blue the streams, and fresh the fields,  
 And beautiful, as now, the waving woods,  
 And exquisite the flowers ; and though the sun  
 Beamed from his cloudless throne from day to day,  
 And, with the breeze and shower, more loveliness  
 Shed o'er this lovely world ; yet all would want  
 A charm, if those sweet denizens of earth  
 And air made not the great creation teem  
 With beauty, grace, and motion ! Who would bless  
 The landscape, if upon his morning walk  
 He greeted not the feathery nations, perched,  
 For love or song, amid the dancing leaves ;  
 Or wantoning in flight from bough to bough,  
 From field to field : ah ! who would bless thee, June,  
 If silent, songless were the groves,—unheard  
 The lark in heaven ?—And he who meets the bee  
 Rifting the bloom, and listless hears his hum,  
 Incessant ringing through the glowing day ;  
 Or loves not the gay butterfly that swims  
 Before him in the ardent noon, arrayed  
 In crimson, azure, emerald, and gold ;  
 With more magnificence upon his wing—  
 His little wing—than ever graced the robe  
 Gorgeous of royalty—is like the kine  
 That wander 'mid the flowers which gem the meads,  
 Unconscious of their beauty.

How exquisite is this :—

Long

He wooed a maid all innocence and truth,  
 And lovely as the loveliest nymph that treads

Thy banks, swift rushing Rhone; and she returned  
 His passionate suit, and every day that came  
 Strengthened the indissoluble charm that wound  
 Itself round their young hearts. Thy skies are blue,  
 Fair Provence, and thy streams are clear, and fringed  
 By the lush vine, that in thy quiet vales  
 Hangs out its full frank clusters, glowing deep  
 With richest amethystine tint; and thou  
 Hast songs of witching minstrelsy from bowers  
 Of fragrance; and amid the deepening shade  
 Of groves, sweet cots—abodes of health and peace,  
 By woodbine, rose, and myrtle sweetly decked.  
 But love has power to fling an added charm  
 Even on the beautiful; and when these met,  
 At magic eve, the soft, the sunny south  
 Yet more enchanting seemed;—the hills, the vales  
 Wore an unearthly charm;—the crystal streams  
 Rolled on with new-born minstrelsies;—the woods  
 Were greener, fairer; and this world arose  
 To their quick-beaming and delighted eyes,  
 With all the hues and forms of Paradise.

If mind thus makes more beautiful the beautiful of earth when it is swayed by the tender passion of love, why, when that mind becomes perfected in the very elements of affection and holiness, should this fair creation be withdrawn? We believe the general opinion to be erroneous on this subject. It may, indeed, be the received idea; but it does not necessarily follow, because it is so received, that therefore it is true: history will point out the fallacy of deeming a thing veritable because it is universal. Our knowledge concerning the unseen world may be limited, but not so limited as many would have us to think; they build their argument on the declaration that "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." On this, too, we build our objection. And first, may not this passage refer to man by nature—man without a revelation? Then is it

true. Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, the heart hath not conceived; but Jehovah hath revealed; he hath opened up; He hath unfolded; He hath unravelled the mystery; He hath withdrawn the veil; He hath poured living sunshine into the dim and dark unknown. If he has not, what mean those glimpses of heaven seen in the book? What mean those scenes of the eternal realm ever and anon brought before the eye in the oracle? Nay, what mean those full and glowing descriptions of the better land, so often protruded on the gaze in the authentic Word? What means that magnificent city, and that limpid stream, and that tree of life? What mean those deep divine hymnings, and those glorious anthems rolling their harmonies upwards to the throne of almighty love and almighty power? And because we have not conceived those transcendent beauties, and those matchless splendours, and those exquisite strains, and those tremendous outbreaks of song, does it therefore follow that God may not have revealed the unutterable vision?

The national religion of the ancient and modern world corroborates the Apostle's assertion. Time would fail us to examine each and every illustration: one or two must suffice. The Grecian mythology was man's conception—man's thought: it was his idea of the unseen world: fair and lovely, and graceful in many of its creations, it was deficient in purity, it was polluted with every crime, debased with every vice. It was without the first element of love; that hallowed principle, in its divinest and most unsullied essence, was not there: it was without holiness. And here we may behold the verity of the scriptural fact that man

hath not conceived the glories that lie beyond that dark barrier which shuts us from the spiritual and eternal.

Passing over the sterner Roman, and the fantastic Hindoo, and the vigorous Norse mythologies, let us take our second illustration from the imagined heaven of the South Sea islander; and we shall find that, with its many brilliant truths, it has not this—the immaculate purity of its inhabitants. And wherever we turn our attention, we shall see that all are wanting in this respect. Now Jehovah reveals it as based on holiness, as shrined in love; a distinct and separate idea from theirs: the great heart of humanity dreamt not, even in its most hallowed moments, of this: it dreamt not of purity; it dreamt not of love: neither did it dream of the spiritual exceeding the corporeal, nor that obedience to the Supreme was the highest freedom. Its paradise was decked with the helenium, and the hellebore, and the henbane; the sleepy poppy and the poisonous hemlock grew on the banks of its dark turbid stream; it was characterized by uncleanness; licentiousness and sensuality were there. Justice there was none; love there was none. Its heaven was the true idea of hell; its true picture, its true essence. It was, indeed, drawn with a master's energy and a master's power, but it bore the dim, black colourings of that "other place." And hence do we find it demonstrably certain that eye hath not seen those holy and unclouded scenes which unfold their beauty and their sweetness in the other world.

But to our belief God himself has revealed the loveliness and unsullied grace of that fair region. Hath he not said that it is smiled on by holiness?—hath he not declared that it is breathed over and pervaded by

the divinest affection? that its beautiful intelligences love?—hath he not said “there shall be no night,” and that weeping and sorrow shall be for ever banished, and ever exiled there?—hath he not said that his own refulgent countenance is the light and glory thereof? If we are wrong in our faith, what mean these descriptions?—what mean these fine bold sketches?—what mean these magnificent paintings?—what mean these withdrawals of the mystic curtain?—what mean these cheering promises? Oh, mean they nothing?—are they meaningless? With voice as of ocean’s roar, and the sublime roll of thunders, yet sweet as the soft cadence of an evening bell, are they, too, without import?

It was necessary that a revelation should tell man whither he was bound; it was necessary that a revelation should declare the characteristics of that world beyond, to which he was verging every moment, and hastening every hour; it was necessary that a revelation should be implicit on this matter, seeing that therein were knitted together the hopes and fears, the consolations and the terrors, of the human breast. And according as it was required, so it was done. Look we in the pages of that Book; what read we? “Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. *But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit*: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.” The darkness which rested on the asserted fact is dispelled by the latter clause; gloom is hence; the twilight has become open day; doubt, certainty. Ever let us read the word with a childlike simplicity, not trusting on man’s wisdom, nor on man’s interpretation, but on the spiritual teaching

of the Holy One. The soul should rest on Him—the First—the pure Essence—the Immaculate.

Heaven is love; love is heaven. He who is made perfect in love, is already in the enjoyment of its bliss. Love—heaven; heaven—love. Thus we reason; perhaps rightly: hence every feeling of the heart should beat with love; every thought be imbued with love. Oh, to reach this, to become thus assimilated to the Everlasting, how glorious! Of all the Bible, we admire the epistles of the beloved disciple the most; how thrilling and divine their melting and subduing tenderness! we cannot read their deep gushing words without once and for ever feeling that heaven is love; love, heaven.

And, indeed, we find that love, when pure and holy, makes even our fallen earth a heaven. The love of any worthy object is bright as the golden beams of a sunny sky lighting up with a greener beauty the dark palms in some ocean's isle. Love nature, and what happiness is ours! Cling to its forms and its majestic shapes, and what unutterable joy! Sit on a solitary sea-rock, watching the dashing of the surging billows, and what inexpressible delight! Gaze ever on the growing dimness of eventide, and what delicious luxury! The being is thrilled, as it were, like an aspen leaf; it is tremulous to every gentle breeze, and every passing sound. And the flowers, too—the peeping upwards of the crimson rose at the dawn of summer, how like the beauty of a blushing countenance, and the sweetness of an angel's lips; the slightest touch, and the soul is moved with ecstatic throbbing! Love ever thus yields an unsullied felicity. We speak not of unchaste, unhalloed, sensual love: ah, no! sad that such a creeping



slimy thing should ever have had its birth-hour: but so it is. We weep to know it; would that it were dead, and swept far off into annihilation! Love parents—love kinsmen—love friends—love wife—love child with the spirit's fondest, purest, deepest affection, and what inexpressible bliss! Nature then becomes more beautiful, and all her scenes tinted with a richer colouring.

Stand on ocean's shore, and, while the western sun casts forth its gloomy grandeur on the hills of Arran, and the breeze sweeps onwards from the far distance, and the hoarse music of the waves dash ever and anon on the ear, look on those clouds that roll and billow around the sinking day-god, and oh! with their every change, and their every hue, will come remembrances of those we love, and those who, night after night, and morning after morning, have kneeled in secret prayer to the Everlasting for us! And with those hallowed and tender memories comes a soft ethereal melody—sad and yet gay—a strange harmony of pensive yet lively tones. And then will the thoughts pierce upwards, and dreams of the better land come over us, visions of its dark-veiled glories, sounds of its mysterious minstrelsy, echoes of its deep-strung praise, reverberations of its rolling anthems, gleams of its magnificent sky, tints of its graceful beauty, colourings of its enchanting loveliness, beams of its vast, and infinite, and imperishable blessedness! And have we not, too, when far away from the waters of the sea, gone often into our chamber in the shadows of eventide, and, closing the door, have we not knelt with those we love, and prayed to the king of that sunny clime? And

the rays of that bright realm, and the mellifluous hymns of that sweet land, and the odoriferous perfumes of its myriad flowers, and its eternal quietude of bliss, have stolen gently over us, and we have arisen full of its tranquil peace, and in the deep gazes of hallowed tenderness have we felt that love is heaven; heaven, love.

If, then, love can exist in this creation, yea, and gather an intensity of delight from its beautiful materialism, why should it be altogether banished from heaven? We may be told that the general tone of the Scriptures discountenances such a view, but in this we differ. We there see that the prophets and the sweet singer of Israel were deeply impressed with the loveliness and grandeur of the outward universe; every passage of their writings teems with some reference to them. The winds are made the symbols of the Almighty's power; the stars are emblems of his majesty; the trees of the forest, and even the wild flower of the field, are all significant of his goodness. Every object is pressed into use; they shine with a perpetual lustre, they sound forth his praise in magnificent and deep-rolling symphonies.

Nor is this all. When the Lord of hosts speaks, he employs them as tokens of his pleasure or anger, his mercy or justice, his wrath or love; they are the expression of the Divine mind to the sons of men; nor, when the new dispensation awakens on the world, and enkindles the horizon with an everlasting brightness, is the fact altered. The Messiah gathers his most beautiful arguments from the lilies of the field and the birds of the air; they carry with them a force which

no sophistry can overturn; there is a grace and dignity about them, a freshness and loveliness which move strangely the heart.

Creation is thus used to illustrate the grand doctrines of everlasting truth; and its Maker does not content himself with barely and simply declaring the fact that he is love, but points to the material universe in confirmation, and as affording one of its most striking proofs. And well he may tell us to look there. Is not this world, even in its present state, an invincible argument for its truth? Does not every floweret of the field, every wild rose of the straggling lane, every limpid current, and every swelling river, beam brightly with the affection of the Most High?—does not every tree and every leaf bear the impress of the tenderness and regard of One who rules above? Oh, and when we gaze on inanimate nature, with its varied scenery bedecked with so much loveliness, and sweetness, and sublimity, we cannot but feel that its Author is in very deed the God of love!

The universe is a token of the Deity's regard; it is the working out of his affection; it is the seal of his benevolence; it is the substantial proof of his mercy; it gleams and beams with spotless and unsullied beauty; it is enrobed in untainted grace; it ever sends up the sweet cadences of song; it glows with unceasing music; and each sound and each sight, whether it be the soft, silvery strain of confiding hope, or the tremendous and sublime stirrings of the storm, or whether it be the calm and quiet landscape of England, or the rugged and magnificent scenery of Switzerland, yet do they all breathe out alike the goodness and care of God.

Would he illustrate the mysterious workings of his

Providence, he points to the birds of the air and the grass of the field; would he speak of his power, he bids us view the hurricane, and the deep roll of the majestic ocean; would he tell us of his dominion, he unveils the cattle on a thousand hills, and the magnificence of the midnight sky; would he describe the vivifying effects of true holiness, he brings it forward under the figure of the water, the fountain, the river; would he enforce the doctrine of man's resurrection, he employs the seed which is cast into the ground, and yet becomes a beautiful flower or a leafy tree; would he inform us of the brightness of the eternal kingdom, he places his finger on the stars; yea, would he make known to us his love, he creates a world!

We find, then, that the soul, when stirred up by affection, draws exquisite delight from this material creation, and that Jehovah himself makes use of its several objects to illustrate the doctrines of revelation; and we have only again to look into that Word, and we believe we may trace some proofs for the presence of nature in the blessed world; we have been too long accustomed to hear all its descriptions of heaven reduced to a vapid spiritualism. Is there any reason why we should be deprived of snow-crowned mountains, and gentle, undulating slopes, and flowery meads, and golden clouds, and the grandeur of sunset and sunrise, and the dim loveliness of twilight, and the splendour of a starry night? Can we see no wonder in these to move our praise?—can we behold no manifestation of their Creator?—is there nothing of his Divine skill?—in the myrtle and in the oak, are there no indications of infinite wisdom and infinite power?—is there nothing to elevate our spirit, and teach us a

deeper homage? Why are these to be banished?—why for ever exiled? Is there cause? We know that our view of the subject is declaimed against; but declamation is not argument. Are the Maker's works so imperfect that it is possible for us to reach beyond them?—rather, are they not so exquisitely faultless that the highest stretch of intellect will never be able to scan all their beauty and all their grace? Does not every new addition of knowledge, and every new discovery, awaken at the same time a new sense of their perfection?—are the ignorant so deeply impressed with their inimitable workmanship as the learned?—is the sensualist so moved with rapture at their Divine loveliness as the lover of the good?

If, then, in our best and holiest seasons creation blushes with its most enchanting beauty, and if it is a truth that the more polluted we become, so much the more our sense for its fair and exquisite charms becomes deadened, then it necessarily follows that the purer our lives, and the higher our condition in the scale of moral and intellectual greatness, so much the more will our faculties become sensitively alive to its resplendent glories and its perfect loveliness. Think we that when sin is bound down to hell, and the bosom is pervaded by a Divine affection, that the daisy and the violet will shame their Creator?—is it not blasphemy to think so? Think we that the angels receive no delight in gazing on the rich and varied prospects of nature? Why did they burst into loud hymnings at the birth of our lonely planet?—why those acclamations of the morning stars, if they revelled not in the freshness of the new-created earth, and had no eye for its untainted sweets?

All that proceeds from the hands of God is faultless; and if so, it follows that the mind can never be so far exalted as to regard his works with indifference. A flower is the handiwork of the Divinity, and can He create an object devoid of beauty? If not, then it must be that the soul, however raised and however dignified, can never reap any other emotions but those of delight whilst gazing on its matchless perfection.

It may be objected to this that there are many deformed and loathsome objects in the world around us; but it should be recollected that we are speaking of a region where sin is not, and where deformity cannot enter, and arguing that the material creation in its most perfect forms is not inconsistent with the highest intellectual vigour and most unsullied purity.

But it seems from what we generally hear that we shall be too holy and too spiritual to regard such labours of the Eternal with anything approaching to delight or pleasure. Is it not dishonouring Him whom we serve, to say that the beautiful operations of his wisdom and power will ever become below our regard? If He could pronounce them very good, then is it not wrong in us to say that they are not in accordance with the essential purity of heaven?—what! not the soft balmy summer sky, and the genial warmth of spring, and the silver crescent, and the twinkling stars, and the music of land and water in sweet agreement with the calm, unruffled serenity of that rest which is above?

In our idea of the sun-lit world, there may indeed be something too sensual for these spiritualisms; but we cannot help it: we believe that the highest holiness may find, and often does find, a deep gratification in viewing

the beauty and glory of the universe; we rest upon firmer ground than mere probability; we have not commenced this argument without due thought; it is no sudden outbreak of enthusiasm; it has been well pondered over; and if we fail to convince, it is not because our proof is weak, but that we ourselves are feeble in setting it in its own refulgent light.

The great God—the highest spiritual essence—the Perfect—the Infinite—delights in the universe which his own hands have formed, and which his own breath has created. It is allowed that nothing which could receive his approbation could be devoid of grace; He is beauty itself; and such could not issue from under his fingers, bearing the impress of his approval, without being beautiful and perfect; deformity cannot come from Him; He is the altogether lovely; and all his works are imprinted with the same exquisite grace and exquisite loveliness.

Before this creation had any existence, its idea was conceived by the Eternal, and as he is perfectly holy, it is clear that its conception would yield delight; every thought and every action of such a Being must breathe happiness and peace. If the conception gave pleasure, surely the working it out in its minute details, as well as its bold and magnificent outline, would of necessity bring the richest enjoyment; and hence when He gazed on the stupendous operations of his power—looked upon it in all its dawning beauty and dawning splendour, we read that he pronounced it very good.

Since, then, it has been shown that the material universe is not incompatible with the Supreme, and since, then, it cannot be inconsistent with the highest and most unsullied purity, it follows that we shall never

be too holy nor too spiritual to regard its glories with indifference.

Nor must it be forgotten that the outward creation borrows much of its beauty from the soul—"Nature always wears the colours of the spirit." Mind is the omnipotent adorer of the universe; it invests its every object with a tenfold charm; it breathes over its every form a nameless loveliness. What is it that gives so deep a witchery to the twilight-hour?—is it not the associations of bygone years, and memories of our beloved ones, and scenes of childhood, and hopes of an unfading bower of bliss that cling around it? Is it not, too, our ethereal part that awakens in each rustle of the leaf, in each gurgling sound of waters, in each coo of the dove, some remembrance of the past, or else some music of the future world? Why do we love the summer with its soft golden clouds, and voice of birds, and perfume of a thousand flowers, and deem it fair and beautiful? Is it not that every object is connected with some thrilling thought of former days, or teems with the deepest manifestations of a father's love? And when looking upwards on the vast vault spangled with a million stars, why do we feel those throbbings and stirrings as if the heart would burst? Is it not that our immortal essence comprehends the truth of the being and attributes of God, and links each orb, as it rolls majestically along the infinitude of space, with its divine Creator? Take away this knowledge, and where is nature's enchanting grace? Enlarge the conception, increase the love, etherealize the whole man, and then tell us if you do not with a quicker ken, and a higher affection, and a loftier spirituality, behold in this magnificent universe a brighter illustration of the Eternal's



power and goodness than ye did when girt around with ignorance and bounded in by a feeble and glimmering light?

If, then, it is the soul that adorns this outspreading creation, may it not be conceived that as the soul progresses in purity and holiness, so will it throw around the visible universe a deeper and a sweeter beauty? Let man awake to love, and immediately what was dull and meaningless before, becomes at once speaking and full of expression; tints of Paradise are seen streaking the horizon with orient hues; flowers of Eden waft their perfumes over the earth; a fairer and a softer light beams from the sky; each cloud is more divinely bright; each star sparkles with an intenser lustre; the grass is clothed with a greener verdure; a deep, delicious music is in every sound; the winds chant a more exquisite song; the roll of ocean's waves are subdued to a gentle liquid cadence; love veils the creation with a thousand graces; there is a freshness and a loveliness as of spring.

Now it is well known that the world was the same before we dreamt of love, and yet what difference!—how is this?—what is the cause?—the soul—that has become spiritualized; the mind is changed, not the universe; in its purer feelings and aspirations, the earth has put on all the dewy charms of a new creation.

If, then, the universe appears so much more beautiful when the spirit becomes alive to its own nature, with what a deeper majesty will it be invested when that spirit is made perfect in love! In heaven we shall be thus perfect; and it will be there, too, that each sense will be gratified with every sweet and lovely form. The perceptions will be more exquisite, the taste more

faultless, the ear more attuned to godlike music, the eye breathing out a deeper ocean of eternal tenderness, and the soul more capable of adorning earth, sea, and sky with inexpressible glories. Jehovah's creation shall then stand in our estimation higher than it ever stood before, and stir up every feeling of our heart to praise, and magnify, and laud the Everlasting One.

Spiritualize our nature, and you, as it were, create anew the earth; deaden its finer energies and thoughts, and you darken the universe of God.

But, it may be said, that at death our spirit will be changed. We cannot admit this: for if it is renewed by the Holy Ghost, it has already eternal life; that principle which will wholly influence him in heaven has already dawned; his celestial being has commenced; his holier existence begun. It is, we know, but a mere glimmering of light, but still it is the beam of that same sun: this cannot be disguised. That which throws so sweet and soft a glory on his path now, is the same which will illumine his future home with all the splendours of an infinite day.

And if this principle delights in the hills and dales of earth, it cannot fail to reap a kindred pleasure when quickened and enlarged under the eternal sunshine of heaven. Did death change this new nature, this new being, then our argument fails; but death does not change it; the divine life is already a part of the future existence; and if it is gratified with a leaf or flower here, it will be equally gratified with a leaf or flower there.

But still there may remain the objection—we shall be as the angels. We believe this, because Christ has told us so: but it is no real objection; it is rather a

proof of our proposition. We have seen that those spiritual natures possess a perception of beauty, and an appreciating taste for the outward loveliness of the universe, when they sent up immortal harmonies as the birth-star glistened in this lower world. If, therefore, they can reap joy and delight from the manifold glories of creation, and as we are to be like them, it follows that we, too, shall receive a deep and glowing gratification from the same exquisite objects.

The "Banks of Tamar" breathes the same spirit and tone as "Dartmoor," and has all its descriptive beauty and liquid tenderness. Our limits forbid us to cull any of its fragrant flowers; we therefore turn to the minor pieces, several of which are, perhaps, more strikingly characteristic of their author. There is much sublimity in "The Storm" and "The Gamester," both of which are written in a masterly manner. How fine is the following:—

Narrow the entrance. Two misshapen rocks  
Rushed up on either hand, and overhung  
Awhile the darkened path, but all within  
Lay in the golden sunshine. Soon was heard  
The low, sweet music of a thousand rills  
Crossing the sward luxuriant, and the rush  
Of mightier streams was heard, that, far off, leaped  
Into the echoing valley. Wider spread  
The glen; and darker, higher rose the cliffs;  
And greener grew the beautiful moist grass;  
And brighter bloomed the flowers—such flowers as love  
A mountain home; and from the clefts the broom  
Looked out; and in the sunshine smiled the heath—  
The bonny heath; and in that valley's breeze  
Waved from the precipice the light-leaved ash;  
And here and there the aged, stunted oak  
Leaned o'er the crumbling brink. At once the war  
Of rock and river burst upon the eye  
And ear astonished. High above, the streams,  
Fed from exhaustless founts, rushed headlong on,  
Where, all uninjured, lay the mountain rocks

Magnificently strewed, and broke the power  
That broke in thunder through them, and upflung  
Their sun-touched foam wreaths to the pleasant gale  
That played around inconstant.

Broader now  
The broken stream rolled onwards, yet deprived  
Of half its fierceness. By the opposing rocks  
It swept, in beautiful motion, and the eye  
Looked on the bright confusion—looked and beamed  
With pleasure, and a gentle calm diffused  
Its influence o'er the spirit, as the tones  
Most musical, through all the languid noon,  
Rose of the broad blue waters.

Pleasantly  
Were interspersed green islets—loved retreats  
Of birds that love the streams. The river flowed  
Darkly beneath the leafage—dark and calm  
A moment—and again, with voice far heard,  
Rushed o'er its pure and glittering bed. The bank  
Now rose precipitous, and from the brink,  
Broken into a thousand bays, the trees,  
In strange association with the cliffs,  
Again upclimbed the slopes. Rock, bush, and flower  
Were there in sweetest union. Hardy, old,  
Stunted, yet vigorous, the oak outflung  
His arms above the crag; his scalp was bare  
And lifeless as that crag he shadowed: struck  
By time or lightning—yet a living thing  
Still joying in the sunshine.

Midway yawned  
A cavern; and bright, and bursting from its jaws  
Into the day, a highland torrent flashed  
Upon the eye. Adown the wooded slopes,  
Leaping from steep to steep, it came, and flung  
Its music on the air of that wild place—  
Wild, yet most beautiful. A silver shower  
Eternal drizzled there; and near it grew  
The moisture-loving moss, arrayed in green  
That rivalled the clear emerald; and plants  
Of freshest leaf, and flowers that fill their cups  
With mountain dews, but wither in the beam  
Of southern skies. One solitary bird,  
To the deep voices of that waterfall,  
Responsive sung a strange but lovely strain,  
Like the soft gurgling which the streamlets make,  
Sweet playing with the pebbles. Never sound  
Within that holy sanctuary rise

Ruder than bird's heart-refreshing strains,  
Or voice of winds, or the undying flow  
Of the complaining waters !

This graphic description recalls to our mind the beautiful valley of the Dove. Many years have flown by since we wandered along the banks of its limpid waters; but time has not robbed those long-remembered hours of their charming sweets; rather hath it added a deeper and diviner witchery. There is ever something peculiarly soothing in reviewing those spots one visits in youth: the spirit instinctively turns with a pleasing, though pensive, delight to those bright and sunny seasons; their scenes become part of the soul; and when the dark clouds of sorrow shut out the clear, blue heavens, we return to them as to some shady, forest-embosomed home, where the storm and the blast and the hurricane are never heard, and around which the wild flowers blossom and bloom eternally.

In this manner have we often lived over again the period we spent at Dovedale. Associations roll a deeper beauty over its fair features. We have since visited its region of loveliness; no blight was there: changes had taken place in the interval among mankind, but this spot stood untouched. The face of friendship had grown pale, and the grave had upheaved its earth to receive the forms of those beloved ones whose smile was light to our dwelling; but this secluded and peaceful dell looked as fresh and as gay as when first beheld. We gazed on each well-known rock, and each forgotten scene, as upon some long-cherished companion. Ah! how often had it refreshed the soul when oppressed and heavy laden! Yes, and we have turned from the lofty Ben Lomond, and the blue summits of Snowden,

and the secluded banks of Eamont's stream, and deemed this simple valley, with its splintered rocks, and its dark green foliage, and its beautiful flowers, and its clear river, and its memories of olden times, even a sweeter and a calmer rest from the toil of existence, and a more peaceful and unbroken haven for the aspirations of the spirit.

It was the leafy month of June that we chose for our visit to Dovedale, when the gale is burdened with the scent of new-made hay; when the birds sing in the woods, and the butterfly roves amid the myriad flowers; when the corn waves in the fields, and the hedgerows fling out their unnumbered sweets; and when the sky is all one unclouded blue. The very month is entwined with memories of joy and gladness; and although May is more refreshing and invigorating, still June breathes a softer and more delicious voluptuousness.

On the first day of this glorious month we set off; it was a beautiful morning; the carols of the birds, the fine azure heavens, the luxuriant foliage, the woodbine and rose and elder waving in the hedges, and the quiet loveliness of nature, filled the heart with a rapturous joy. We rode onward, passing the gates of old and venerable halls, and through several villages, with their rustic cottages and ancient churches. The road was finely wooded until we entered Derbyshire; then, instead of green hedges, and thick underwood, and wide-spreading plantations, we saw nothing but dull stone walls and far-stretched fields. We continued our journey, and at length saw before us Dovedale—the valley of the Dove! and to one whose love of creation is a passion, and the all-absorbing influence, there is no scene more soothing than a still and lonely dell. Every

tumultuous emotion is calmed; every feeling subdued; there is an air of undisturbed repose which contrasts strangely with the bustle of life. The appearance of the vale from the distance is very striking; its wild simplicity, its high hills, its dark green shrubs, its scattered sheep, its grey sides seen just as the sun is sinking westward, and the breeze begins to play, are not without a thrilling and binding power.

The memories of the past came over us. Here, in days gone by, lingered the good old Izaak Walton, and his friend Cotton; here, too, the open-hearted Goldsmith, and Sir Humphrey Davy, and Byron, and James Montgomery have rambled. All have spoken of its charms, but none with so much grace and beauty as the venerable angler: he has shed a hallowed influence on stream, and hill, and dale; and to one whom he had enchanted with his mellowed page, this dell could not but be deeply interesting. Around the region he has thrown a classical loveliness; by its clear waters did he stroll, and often would he pause and drink in the glory of creation. How eloquently would he talk of honeysuckle hedges, and April showers, and sunny skies, and odorous grass, and meadows sprinkled with the daisy and the cowslip; indeed, so great was his love for this stream, that a cottage was raised in one of its most romantic nooks for the reception of fishers, and over the door was inscribed the cipher of his own and his brother's name. It remains much the same as when first erected, and the description of Viator is not unsuitable to its present condition: "It stands in a kind of peninsula, with a delicate clear river about it; I am the most pleased with this little house of anything I ever saw. I dare hardly go in, lest I should not like it

so well within as without; but by your leave I'll try. Why, this is better and better: fine lights, finely wainscoted, and all exceeding neat, with a marble table in the middle!"

The beautiful spots of Nature receive much of their fascinating charm from the associations wherewith they are surrounded: the mind of man throws a more hallowed loveliness over creation; the lovely scene becomes yet more lovely by his power, the universe may be sublime, the earth may be fair, the ocean may be shrouded in with grandeur as of eternity; but sublime, and fair, and grand as these may be, still do they put on a more thrilling magnificence when touched by the Immortal.

Dovedale is about four miles north-west of Ashbourne—a pretty, old-fashioned town, containing one of the most beautiful churches in the kingdom, and an ancient grammar-school. Ashbourne also possesses a peculiar interest from the visits of Johnson, and from Prince Charles Stuart having twice passed through its streets with his brave followers, in the memorable 1745.

The length of the sweet valley is nearly three miles; and its breadth in no part exceeds more than a quarter, whilst in many places it is so narrow as scarcely to leave a passage for its beautiful river. Its stream divides Staffordshire from Derbyshire, the sides of which present somewhat different features: whilst the banks of the former are clothed with a luxuriant vegetation, the banks of the latter are destitute of shrub and tree. The hills that shut in this romantic dale are very steep, and their sharp-pointed rocks, overgrown with ivy, and moss, and lichen, peering upwards amongst the green summer foliage, have all



the appearance of ruined castles and time-worn minsters: over all is cast an unruffled stillness, which the low dashing of the water does little to disturb.

We put up at the inn called after the venerable name of Izaak Walton, and from which the entrance of the dell is seen. In a few moments, we commenced our walk down the valley, first passing across a rustic bridge. Silence sat upon every object, which the murmurings of the stream seemed to deepen: nothing can be more picturesque and beautiful than its varied scenes: at one time all is ruined and desolated with dashing waters; at another, gentle and romantic in the extreme. At length we reached the Reynard's Cave: before it rises a magnificent arch, and from beneath, one of the finest views may be obtained. This spot possesses a mournful interest from the following fact; and beautiful as is this scene, yet does the sad account invest it with a lovelier shade. A dignitary of the church, Dr. Langton, Dean of Clogher, while on a visit at Longford Hall, in July, 1761, spent a day at Dovedale, and on returning, he proposed to ride up this steep acclivity, when Miss La Roche, a lady of the party, proposed to accompany him on the same horse. In its attempt upwards, the animal fell, and the clergyman received such injuries that he died in a few hours; the youthful companion was, however, more fortunate, and escaped with a few slight bruises. Gazing from under this vast archway upon the scene below, the mind soon puts on a solemnity of thought and feeling.

We began to return about nine; only one single star shot forth its solitary light, and the dale at this time was awfully grand. Our feelings were inexpressible:

in a glen—hearing the rush of waters—a lone star serving to make darkness visible—at intervals a bird flitting by—the boughs voiceless—the drowsy tinkling of the sheep-bell borne on the breeze was beautifully sublime! In such an hour our thoughts were led to subjects of strange import: never shall we forget the thrilling sensibility that almost overpowered our bosom. From earth the spirit ascended to the Eternal—it felt itself to be a part of the Everlasting Mind; and then again it returned to earth. Might not this be the only land wherein the banner of rebellion was unfurled and uplifted, was the fancy that crossed over the soul,—whether transgression had dimmed the glories of yonder world, which now twinkled so brightly in the dark hemisphere, or whether it was the abode of peace, was a question continually started: it was in accordance with the pensive shadows of the night, and blended with all the emotions of the heart.

We sat at the evening repast in silence; our thoughts were strangely solemn, our dreams partook of the same character. In a lonely dell we walked, and then the soul seemed lifted aloft into the pure ether, and there were scenes of wonder, and glorious beauty, and mighty shapes, and low liquid melodies, and flowers of every hue and every form, and skies serenely bright, and dwellings rose-clustered, lovely as the opening dawn; and then again we were rambling along the dark, dim, solitary valley, and we listened to its rushing waters, and gazed upon the silver light of its single star, and thought——!

The soft, still radiance of day came stealing in at the window, and awoke us: our eye turned instinctively towards the dell. Soon after breakfast, we started on

our way to Ilam Hall, the seat of Jesse Watts Russell, Esq., M.P. After crossing the river Manifold, by a neat bridge, we soon arrived at the entrance gates, which have a fine appearance. A pretty park led to the church. We love to see a good old English church! Those dear grey piles, with their spires and towers, are the pride of our villages, the beauty of our cities, and the glory of our land: "Crowning a flowery slope it stood alone in gracious sanctity." The ancient fane, overgrown with dark green ivy, presents a very picturesque appearance; its exterior is plain and neat; the principal object of attraction here is the mausoleum, containing a sculptured group, by Chantrey, in memory of Pike Watts, Esq., the father of the late Mrs. Watts Russell. It is a small gothic chapel, of octagonal shape, erected on the north side of the church: the monument is exquisite. The venerable old man is represented as bestowing his parting blessing on his daughter and her little ones during the midnight hour. The effect is strikingly solemn; every surrounding object is shut out from view by the dim religious glass of the windows: the light falls on the features of parent and children with peculiar softness; it is richly radiated with a calm, quiet loveliness; it is a spot, once seen, never forgotten; its stillness, and its mellowed beams, and its touching memorial, leave their remembrance on the soul for ever.

From here, we proceeded to the mansion, "which is built of stone; its outline and elevation are remarkably good; its style is a compound of Saxon, Tudor, and Elizabethan. A fine oriel window occupies a conspicuous and central position in the principal front, to

the right of which appear the painted windows of the entrance; a hanging garden supported on arches forms a bold projection on the left; while, towering high above the other parts of the edifice, rises the flag-turret, a noble and characteristic feature in the pile. When the flag is hoisted, fanned as it is by the mountain breezes, its crimson drapery may be seen waving at a great distance, and in some points of view, where it peeps forth, the effect is most beautiful; to the left, and likewise in the rear of the mansion, a hanging wood of great richness and beauty clothes the declivities of a precipitous hill, at the base of which lies the rocky bed of the river Manifold: the same wood sweeping round to the eastward, forms an admirable background to the picture; while on the right are seen the mountains of Dovedale, which have an air of dreary grandeur, contrasting strangely with the luxuriance of the wooded hills on the left."

After spending some time in the grounds, and viewing the spot where Congreve wrote several of his plays, we passed along fields covered with daisies and yellow kingcups, and sweetly scented with their many hedges, until we came to Blore Church. It is a fine old church, and its village quite rustic; it was formerly the demesne and seat of the Bassetts; but their glory has faded. We were shown over the sacred edifice, which, although much dilapidated, is not devoid of beauty; here are a few monumental records of its former lords; the solemn quietness, and calm, mellowed light which prevailed, suited our mood; the ivy had stolen through the roofs, and within its walls a bird had built her nest.

We turned from the sacred pile, and rested ourselves for awhile at the parsonage; the social blessedness of its inmates was no mean appendage to the church. We then ascended some hills that led us back to Dovedale, and rambled again among its romantic scenes. The sun was now in mid-heaven; every breeze lagged; the murmuring of the waters sounded strangely in the spot of unruffled silence; the trees and shrubs, and rocks uprearing their sides to the sky, clothed with lichens and moss and thyme, and the clear stream, sweetly flowing through its banks, adorned with wild flowers, looked beautiful and gay beneath the serene blue of day: it was a place for silent musing and delicious dreams; its charms had power to loosen imagination's wings—and how wide were its flights! Combinations of all richest sounds rolled on the ear; and there was music in the cloudless firmament and the fair earth: we rambled along winding sheep-tracks, and often sat us down beneath some impending rock. The river glided onwards, now purling in sweet melody, and now rushing down some small cataract with hoarse music: the voice of birds had ceased; creation lay still and motionless beneath the noontide heat. Walton and Cotton were not forgotten in this quiet season—their memories added a deeper romance to the dell.

In the evening, we ascended Thorpe Cloud, a steep hill that overlooks the valley; a few sheep were scattered on its sides. The winds had risen, and blew tremendously; the shadows of night came slowly down; the waters, and the dell, and the splintered rocks, and the foliage, and the wild flower, were soon enveloped in

gloom; the fine sun had departed, and a few gleams of sullen grandeur were all that could be distinguished in the distant horizon; the gale rushed furiously up the mountain; a light or two glimmered in the darkness, issuing, perhaps, from some secluded home. We sat in silence; our thoughts were tinged with a sweet solemnity; the calm beauty of the day, and the fair loveliness of creation, and the romantic dell, and the time-worn buildings of former years, and the ancient churches, and the exquisite monumental record of a child's affection, had disposed the mind to serious musing; the sheep-bell, borne upwards by the sounding wind, awoke us from our meditative trance, and we descended to the inn, softened, subdued, and calmed.

The following day, we took our last look at Dove-dale; we lingered among its winding sheep-tracks, and its hills, and its beautiful walks along the gushing stream, and its meadows, and its romantic scenes, in that gaze. On our way to Friar's Wood, we visited Alton Towers and Wotton Lodge; and though not connected with this quiet dell, still, as they were beheld during the same visit, they are for ever associated with it. After a ride of nine miles, we came upon the former—it is the splendid seat of the Earl of Shrewsbury; its style is the modern Gothic, and when seen at a distance, with its rising towers, the effect is very imposing. Its grounds are, however, the chief attraction; and here we have the dark, green foliage, and the beautiful flowers, and the cooling waters, and the murmuring fountains, and the high-domed conservatories, and the sculptured marble, and the antique

vases, and the romantic cottages, reposing in the quietude and enchanting loveliness of a long-extended valley—it is an Eden in its pristine witchery.

From here a short stroll brought us to Wotton Lodge. Never were we more delighted with a mansion; it is a castellated building, standing embosomed in well-wooded hills. It was garrisoned by the Royalists during the civil wars, and defended by Sir Richard Fleetwood, but was soon taken by the Parliamentarians. "It is situated in as solemnly striking a solitude," writes Howitt. "as one can well conceive: it stands up aloft, on a natural terrace overlooking a deep winding glen, and surrounded by sloping uplands, deep masses of wood, and the green heights of Weaver, in a situation of solitary beauty, which exceedingly delighted me. Not a person was visible throughout the profoundly silent scene; scarcely a house was within view. I ascended to the front of the lodge, and stood in admiration of its aspect: its tall, square bulk of dark grey stone, with its turreted front, full of large, square mullioned windows; its paved court, and ample flight of steps ascending to its porched door; its old garden, with terraces and pleached hedges on the south slope below it; and deep again below that, dark ponds visible amongst the wild growth of trees. The house stood, without a smoke, without a sign of life or movement about it, in the broad sunshine of noon. I advanced, and rang the bell in the porch, but no one answered me. It was, for all the world, like a hall of old romance laid under an enchanted spell. I rang again, but all was silent. I descended the flight of steps, and paced the grey pavement of the court, and was about to withdraw, when

an old woman opened the casement in the highest story, and said, in a slow, dreamy voice, 'I am coming down.'"

Ere twilight had again darkened the earth, we reached our pleasant home, with the beauty of Dove-dale and its adjacent scenery engraven on the heart for ever.



## EDWIN ATHERSTONE.

"The world, believe it, the world has nothing solid—nothing durable; it is only a fashion, and a fashion too, that passeth away. Yes, sirs, the tenderest friendships end. Honours are specious titles, which time effaces. Pleasures are amusements, which leave only a lasting and painful repentance. Riches are torn from us by the violence of men, or elude us by their own instability. Grandeurs moulder away of themselves. Glory and renown at length lose themselves in the abysses of an eternal oblivion. So rolls the torrent of this world, whatever pains are taken to stop it. Everything is carried away by a rapid train of passing moments; and by continual revolutions we arrive, frequently, without thinking of it, at that fatal point where time finishes and eternity begins! Happy the Christian soul who, obeying the precept of Jesus Christ, loves not the world, nor anything that the world contains."

ARCHBISHOP FLECHIER.

THE mystery which enshrouds the history of Nineveh renders what little we know more deeply interesting: we have but few records, but those records characterize it as a city of vast and unparalleled magnificence. We look back upon this great Assyrian capital as on some mighty and stupendous dream. The outline is indistinct, the colouring imperfect, and the figures broken, but there is one grand feature of majesty and glory upon each and all; everything is Titanic; everything is colossal. There is a splendour about the very figments which strikes one with awe and astonishment.

And this greatness has passed away, as passes the morning dew or the April shower; a few crumbling walls are all that remain of its pomp and glory. Its voluptuous banquetings have departed; the voice of the singer is no more heard; the dulcimer and harp are mute; the dancing girl has ceased to move; its palm, and cedar, and pine have faded; its flowers, which flung their odours on every breeze, have perished; its temples and palaces are not; its star, once so bright and resplendent, has waned, and gone down; there is scarce a streak of twilight in the horizon. The gigantic power and the gigantic monarchy have fallen; their thrones are in the dust: they have been; they are not now. Three thousand years ago, and the sun shook off its glories in the sky, and Nineveh stretched herself as a giant beneath its rays: that sun arose to-day, and all was desolation—the million homes swept away, and the million inhabitants in the grave;—once its abodes towered up to heaven, and its chariots poured through its “two-leaved gates,” and its vast population rent the air with shoutings: see that mound of bricks; it is the only remnant! “So let all thine enemies perish, O Lord!”

History's tale is short and brief; and prophecy, too, says little; but that little shadows out its magnificence and renown.

In the year 1237, B. C., Ninus, flushed with victory, laid the foundation of the Assyrian capital. At his death, Semiramis became regent during the minority of their son, and added much to the city. Her strength of mind, energy of will, and boldness of execution, contributed greatly to extend the glory of her husband's kingdom. Ninyas then ascended the throne, but instead of exhibit-

ing any of his parents' vigour, he gave himself up to debauchery and effeminacy; his successors followed but too closely and too well his example; and the people groaned beneath the injustice of sordid ministers.

Behold that rectangular city! it has numbered four hundred years. There is a sound of revelling and drunkenness; her daughters have grown wanton; the capital is in one tumultuous uproar; a strange, wild man enters; he travels onwards, crying:—"Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!" On, still on, he passes; his finger pointed skyward, his eye beams with the prophetic fire, and his lips quiver with the prophetic language. The rose-bowers, the myrtle-walks, and the gorgeous palaces are forsaken; the people crowd around; they question: no answer comes, but the ever-awful denunciation: "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown." That man has departed.

The city sends up its mournings and lamentations: sackcloth instead of royal apparel. Young virgins tear off their fine linen, and clothe themselves in the dark black garb: instead of flowery wreaths, ashes; instead of the dance, the bended knee; the multitude moans; repentance goes upwards; the throne is reached; the capital stands!

Those myriads are dust; the earth covers them all. Five generations have lived, and are here in the tomb. The palaces still look glorious, and the rose-bowers and myrtle-walks are as lovely as when last we gazed. The splendour and the magnificence of the city are undiminished. The fresh wind sweeps over her thousand domes and minarets as before; their architecture outspreads its beauties to the sun. There is the rich per-

fume of jasmine, and the silver music of a million fountains. The day-god westering, sinks; the halls are lighted up, and sparkle with myriad gems; and low, sweet harmonies breathe out their divine witcheries. Midnight overhangs the capital of the world.

Morning breaks. At the chief entrance stands a stranger of commanding mien; he surveys the princely buildings; his lips move: he speaks:—"Woe to the bloody city! it is full of lies and robbery; the prey departeth not; the noise of a whip, and the noise of the rattling of the wheels, and of the prancing horses, and of the jumping chariots. The horseman lifteth up both the bright sword and the glittering spear: and there is a multitude of slain, and a great number of carcases; and there is none end of their corpses; they stumble upon their corpses: because of the multitude of the whoredoms of the well-favoured harlot, the mistress of witchcrafts, that selleth nations through her whoredoms, and families through her witchcrafts. Behold, I am against thee, saith the Lord of hosts; and I will discover thy skirts upon thy face, and I will show the nations thy nakedness, and the kingdoms thy shame. And I will cast abominable filth upon thee, and make thee vile, and will set thee as a gazing-stock. And it shall come to pass, that all they that look upon thee shall flee from thee, and say, Nineveh is laid waste: Who will bemoan her? Whence shall I seek comforters for thee? Art thou better than populous No, that was situate among the rivers, that had the waters round about it, whose rampart was the sea, and her wall was from the sea? Ethiopia and Egypt were her strength, and it was infinite; Put and Lubim were thy helpers: yet was she carried away, she went into captivity; her

young children also were dashed in pieces at the top of all the streets; and they cast lots for her honourable men, and all her great men were bound in chains. Thou also shalt be drunken; thou shalt be hid; thou also shalt seek strength, because of the enemy. All thy strongholds shall be like fig-trees with the first ripe figs; if they be shaken, they shall even fall into the mouth of the eater. Behold, thy people in the midst of thee are women; the gates of thy land shall be set wide open unto thine enemies; the fire shall devour thy bars. Draw the waters for the siege, fortify thy strongholds: go into clay, and tread the mortar, make strong the brick-kiln. There shall the fire devour thee; the sword shall cut thee off; it shall eat thee up like a canker-worm: make thyself many as the canker-worm—make thyself many as the locusts. Thou hast multiplied thy merchants above the stars of heaven: the canker-worm spoileth, and fleeth away. Thy crowned are as the locusts, and thy captains as the great grasshoppers, which camp in the hedges in the cold day, but when the sun ariseth, they flee away, and their place is not known where they are. Thy shepherds slumber, O King of Assyria; thy nobles shall dwell in the dust; thy people is scattered upon the mountains, and no man gathereth them. There is no healing of thy bruise; thy wound is grievous; all that hear the bruit of thee shall clap the hands over thee: for upon whom hath not thy wickedness passed continually?"

The people scoff and the princes taunt; they believe not. Sardanapalus, the king, returns back to his palace, and again attires himself in woman's apparel; music, the song, and the dance will drown every presentiment!

Ever and anon mockeries arise. Revel on—the storm is breaking!

A few hours, and there is the rumour of a revolt: the melodies cease; the monarch girds himself for war; he rushes out, followed by his troops, and defeats the rebels. Joy once more is in the city!

Belesis and Arbaces twice again offer resistance, and twice again are driven back.

The moon shines softly down, and the whole heaven is gemmed with burning stars: Orion there, and the Pleiades, and Mazzaroth; the mountains stand stilly in the clear, bright night, and the palm and fir wave their branches in the hollow gusts that ever and anon sweep up their sides. There is the sound as of a human voice in prayer; the supplication deepens in its intonations; the language every moment grows more impassioned; it beseeches destruction on Assyria's king: the words wax louder and more eloquent; there is a struggle as of death; it breaks into one tremendous ejaculation—"Nineveh must fall! Nineveh must fall!"

The sun arises; the streak of light chequers the horizon; the stars fade out; the moon is as some small fleecy cloud; the mountain-tops are crimsoned with the coming brightness; the dark, majestic trees are tinged with the same rich colouring; twilight wanes; the sun ascends higher yet and higher; the last words come on the ear, as the dashing of a cataract beneath a stormy sky, or the crash of a forest oak splintered by the lightning's flash—"Nineveh must fall! Nineveh must fall!"

Belesis—for that is the man—now joins his companions, and promises help in five days, if they will but

tarry. The first morning comes up, and fades into the dim night; the second and the third pass away—there is breathless suspense; the other two have gone, and still no assistance. We will return home to our wives and our little ones is the general thought. Suddenly there are tidings of the march of the Bactrian troops on their way to the monarch; these are gained over to revolt, and the rebels, thus reinforced, attack the royal camp, and drive Sardanapalus to the city.

Two long years have passed, and the capital of the world still uprears its magnificent front to the sky, and the third has come;—there is yet energy and vigour in the besiegers and the besieged. The river, once its safeguard as well as ornament, heaves, and swells, and overflows; it has now become its enemy, according to ancient prediction. Silence is in the palace, and everlasting leave-taking; smoke curls upwards; it is from the funeral-pile of the Assyrian empire!

Atherstone's poem on this subject is perhaps the most gorgeous and brilliant in the English language; nothing can equal its oriental splendour and voluptuousness. The verse is laden with the richest perfumes, and the loveliest flowers, and the silver spray of fountains, and delicious fruits, and deep-toned symphonies, and dream-like melodies, and golden wines, and softest alabaster lamps, and marble walls, and thrones as of one huge diamond, and orange groves, and myrtle walks, and rose bowers, and whisperings of trees and birds, and the distant hum of the vast city, and the din of battle, and purple banners, and the thunderous clashings of the chariots, and the tremendous shoutings of the hostile hosts, and the dashing of the heavy rain, and the flash of lightnings, and the ponderous thunder-

peals. There are ravishing strains of music, and long banquetings, and moonlight nights, and shady groves, and invocation to the stars, and the voice of tenderness, and love's sweet looks, and festivals, and dark councils, and the mighty murmurings of rebellion, and the sounds of defeat, and the cries of triumph. The events move but slowly, but they move with majesty and grandeur; the poem intoxicates one with its beauties—stuns by its magnificence. We might have been wandering in some luxurious Eden, with its perfection and glory, for years, and then have suddenly seen the enchanting spot swept over by the howling winds and lashed to atoms. We are at first astonished, and then sink back palled; there is a dazzling vividness about all his descriptions, but it is often too bright for common eyes.

What a picture of eastern voluptuousness is this!—

The moon is clear, the stars are coming forth,  
The evening breeze fans pleasantly. Retired  
Within his gorgeous hall, Assyria's king  
Sits at the banquet, and in love and wine  
Revels delighted. On the gilded roof  
A thousand golden lamps their lustre fling,  
And on the marble walls, and on the throne,  
Gem-bossed, that, high on jasper steps upraised,  
Like to one solid diamond quivering stands,  
Sun-splendours flashing round. In woman's garb  
The sensual king is clad, and with him sit  
A crowd of beauteous concubines. They sing,  
And roll the wanton eye, and laugh, and sigh,  
And feed his ear with honeyed flatteries,  
And laud him as a god. All rarest flowers,  
Bright-hued and fragrant, in the brilliant light  
Bloom as in sunshine: like a mountain-stream,  
Amid the silence of the dewy eve,  
Heard by the lonely traveller through the vale,  
With dream-like murmuring melodious,  
In diamond showers a crystal fountain falls.  
All fruits delicious, and of every clime,  
Beauteous to sight, and odoriferous,  
Invite the taste; and wines of sunny light,



Rose-hued, or golden, for the feasting gods  
 Fit nectar : sylph-like girls, and blooming boys,  
 Flower-crowned, and in apparel bright as spring,  
 Attend upon their bidding : at the sign,  
 From bands unseen, voluptuous music breathes,  
 Harp, dulcimer, and, sweetest far of all,  
 Woman's mellifluous voice.

Nor is the gay luxuriousness of the Assyrian capital  
 less gorgeously pencilled:—

Through all the city sounds the voice of joy  
 And tipsy merriment. On the spacious walls,  
 That, like huge sea-cliffs, girt the city in,  
 Myriads of wanton feet go to and fro :  
 Gay garments rustle in the scented breeze,  
 Crimson and azure, purple, green, and gold :  
 Laugh, jest, and passing whisper are heard there ;  
 Timbrel, and lute, and dulcimer, and song ;  
 And many feet that tread the dance are seen,  
 And arms uplifted, and swaying heads plume-crowned,  
 So is the city steeped in revelry.

Deeper are the tints of his pencil in the fine sketch  
 of the Assyrian queen:—

Thus speaking, a cerulean mantle first,  
 Wide flowing, airy as the gossamer,  
 Round her fine shoulders, with majestic grace,  
 The royal dame disposed, and on her breast  
 With clasp of pearl and ruby lightly bound ;  
 O'er her dark tresses next—all unadorned  
 Save in their own luxuriant loveliness—  
 And o'er her pale and melancholy face,  
 Augustly beautiful ! a rich veil threw ;  
 Then with her damsels—graceful as love's queen,  
 Majestic as the imperial spouse of Jove—  
 Forth from the palace walked, and the steep mount  
 With slow step 'gan to climb.

The monarch raises a mount over the ashes of his  
 great progenitor. The million troops crowd around  
 the walls. The king ascends and gazes on the vast

multitudes. The Assyrian banner is uplifted; it flaps over the huge city :

At that sight  
The plain was in a stir : the helms of brass  
Were lifted up—and glittering spear-points waved,  
And banners shaken—and wide trumpet mouths  
Upturned ; and myriads of bright harnessed steeds  
Were seen uprearing, shaking their proud heads ;—  
And brazen chariots in a moment sprang,  
And clashed together. In a moment more  
Up came the monstrous universal shout,  
Like a volcano's burst. Up, up to heaven  
The multitudinous tempest tore its way,  
Rocking the clouds : from off the swarming plain,  
And from the city rose the mingled cry,  
" Long live Sardanapalus, king of kings !  
May the king live for ever ! " Thrice the flag  
The monarch waved ; and thrice the shouts arose  
Enormous, that the solid walls were shook,  
And the firm ground made tremble.

At his height,  
A speck scarce visible, the eagle heard,  
And felt his strong wing falter : terror struck,  
Fluttering and wildly screaming, down he sank—  
Down through the quivering air : another shout,  
His talons droop—his sunny eye grows dark—  
His strengthless pennons fail—plumb down he falls,  
Even like a stone. Amid the far off hills,  
With eye of fire, and shaggy mane upreared,  
The sleeping lion in his den sprang up ;  
Listened awhile,—then laid his monstrous mouth  
Close to the floor, and breathed hot roarings out  
In fierce reply.

Perhaps the following is one of Atherstone's most beautiful passages :

"Twas midnight now : the melancholy moon,  
With wasted face unwillingly arose  
To walk her weary course : upon the plains  
Gleamed faintly the moist herbage : shadows drear,  
And long, from lofty and umbrageous trees,  
Slept on the earth ; pale light, and dreamy shade  
Covered the silent city ; her huge towers,  
Like a Titanic watch, all standing mute ;

And in the centre, like the spectre-form  
Of perished Saturn, or some elder god,  
The dim vast mound. Within their tents, the hosts,  
Or on the earth, in heavy slumber lay;  
Some of the battle dreaming,—some of love,  
Of home, and smiling wives, and infants some;  
The chase some urged—some at the wine board sat,  
And drank unmeasured draughts, and thirsted still.

There is something sublime in this silence over the gigantic city and the sleeping hosts. It is not the balmy silence after the last warble of the shepherd's lute has sunk away; nor the silence after the last silvery chime of the chapel bell, heard in some lone wood, has floated on the air; nor the silence after the majestic symphonies of the organ have died along the cathedral aisles; nor the silence after the fall of some forest-tree which has looked upon the rising sun for centuries; nor the silence of ocean after it has spent its force, and ripples gently on the shore; nor the silence of the out-stretched creation after the deep loud crash of thunders; nor the silence after the hurricane has swept thousands into the grave, and desolated the beautiful homes of the happy; nor the silence of the north, which, says Alfieri, "makes one feel himself removed far beyond the boundaries of existence." It is a silence, sublimer and more momentous. The coming conflict—the unfurling of banners—the war shouts—the martial clangs—the rushing of the hostile armies—the dying shrieks—the clashing of chariots—the snorting of steeds—the tremendous slaughter give the silence an expression which seems, as it were, to stop the breathing of the heart.

These, descriptive of battle, display great power :

But now in horrid shock the chariots joined :  
Dreadful the crash of wheels fast locked—the rush  
Of mailed steeds,—the ringing of the shields,

Corslets, and helms; and dreadful were the shouts  
Of triumph, and the cries and dying groans.  
Now, too, on either side, the barbed steeds—  
Ten times ten thousand—to the battle rushed;  
And the earth shook.

Then on the Assyrians came,  
Confusion and dismay; and, as they turned,  
Shunning the iron tempest, with loud shouts  
The foe pursued, and terrified the steeds,  
That they fled headlong.

Toward the black, thunderous ceiling, pointing up,  
Thus shouted he, and in th' Assyrian host  
Poured terror.

With a shout,  
Louder than thunder, all that mighty host  
Turned suddenly, and on th' astonished Medes  
Drove like a hurricane. They, amazed and stunned,  
Heard, saw, and wavered; for, as one to four,  
Their numbers were,—their limbs with toil were worn,—  
They had no walls of refuge. All amazed  
There stood they doubtfully; then looked behind,—  
Looked—turned—and fled.

Turned now the hosts  
From conflict both; for, with redoubled rage  
The storm came on: in torrents fell the rain,—  
The wind arose—the lightnings thicker flashed:  
Earth rocked beneath the thunders. To the walls  
Hasted the Assyrians,—towards their camp the Medes.

As when, at sultry noon, the thunderous clouds,  
Dark, motionless, and silent, threatening hang,—  
No wind is felt, and not a sound is heard;—  
If, then, th' ethereal bolt, with sudden glance,  
The black mass fire, out roars the awful peal,—  
Cloud calls to cloud,—air quivers, and earth shakes:  
Even so,—dark lowering, with amazement mute,  
His vehement words to hear, the multitude  
Stood motionless, even so at once outburst  
On that dead stillness the tremendous shout.  
A thousand swords leaped forth,—ten thousand tongues,  
With dreadful accents, for the Assyrian's blood  
Called out.

But, as when loudest roars the hurricane,  
 When pines bow down, and stubborn oaks are rent ;  
 With yet a louder voice the thunder-god  
 From the opening cloud doth call ; so o'er the din  
 Of furious myriads, the tremendous shout  
 Rose of Arbaces.

As when, by adverse winds impelled, two clouds,  
 Black and enormous, are together driven,  
 Outleap the lightnings, and the thunders roar :  
 Cloud calls to cloud,—mountain to mountain shouts,—  
 Heaven unto earth, and earth to heaven again,—  
 With uproar such, doubts redoubling, rose  
 The clamours of the fierce, encountering hosts.

Tremendous now the thickening conflict grew ;  
 Host against host, like wave 'gainst mountain wave,  
 Rolling and heaving. Not a cloud in heaven  
 Stirred from its place,—the winds were locked,—no leaf  
 Moved,—nor thin blade, nor pendant gossamer :—  
 As if the issue of that mortal strife  
 Breathless awaiting, nature seemed to pause.

In contrast with these, the following loses none of  
 its beauty:—

Upon a couch,  
 Purple, and gold, and gems, the king reposed :  
 His eyes were shut, his countenance was pale :  
 Before him, but not near, Azubah sat,  
 O'er the harp bending, and her lulling song  
 Like a sweet perfume breathing.

One other of Atherstone's gorgeous paintings, and  
 we must quit this magnificent production. Thrice  
 have the rebels been routed, and the Assyrian con-  
 queror returns in pride and glory to his capital:—

A myriad gonfalons of bright hue streamed,  
 A myriad silver trumpets spake to heaven :  
 Blazed the bright chariots—the gold-spangled steeds  
 Beneath their flaming riders proudly trode ;  
 Flashed helm and shield of gold, and dazzling mail ;  
 And, with unnumbered martial instruments  
 Accompanied,—unto the mighty Bel,

And to Sardanapalus, king of kings,  
Triumphal hymns the host together sang.  
Her brazen gates wide flung the city then,  
And on the plain, with acclamations loud,  
The conqueror hailing, countless multitudes,  
Dense thronging, poured ; and on her walls the throngs  
Expecting stood ; and on her lofty towers.  
Assyria's damsels there, and peerless dames,  
Like tulip beds, in richest vesture clad,  
Made sunshine seem more bright,—and, to the breath  
Of the sweet south, a sweeter fragrance breathed,  
But, beautiful amidst the beautiful,  
Amid a bright heaven the one brightest star,  
Assyria's goddess queen, in regal state  
Magnificent,—to pomp imparting grace,  
To triumph majesty,—her lord to meet,  
From the great central eastern gate came forth.  
High throned upon a car, with gold and gems  
Refulgent, slowly rode she. Diamond wreaths,  
Amid her ebon locks luxuriant, gleamed,  
Like heaven's lamps through the dark : her ample robe,  
Sky-hued, like a waving sapphire glowed,  
And round one graceful shoulder wreathed ; one arm  
Of rose-tinged snow, a web-like drapery,  
Bright as a ruby streak of morning, hung.  
Beneath her swelling bosom, chastely warm,  
A golden zone, with priceless gems thick starred,  
Flashed gentle lightnings. The unresting fire  
Of diamond, and the ruby's burning glow,  
With the pure sapphire's gentle beam mixed there :  
The fiery topaz, with the emerald cool,  
Like sunshine dappling the spring meadows, played  
Gold was the clasp, and diamond. Bracelets light,  
Of emerald, and diamond, and gold,  
On each fine tapered, pearly wrist she wore :  
And, round her pillared neck majestic,  
A slender chain of diamonds,—the weight  
Sustaining of one priceless diamond,  
Like dawn faint blushing, radiant as the morn,  
That on her creamy bosom, like a spark  
Of sun-fire on rich pearl embedded,—lay.  
With graceful ease, and perfect dignity,  
Yet womanly softness, like a shape of heaven,  
In majesty of beauty,—pale, serene,—  
With eye oft downcast, yet with swelling heart,  
Proudly exultant, on her gorgeous seat  
Reclined, of Tyrian purple, golden-fringed,—  
Of all eyes mutely worshipped, she rode on.

In shining cars, behind Assyria's queen,  
The sons and daughters also of the king,  
To grace the triumph of the conqueror came.

He in his blazing chariot, like a god,  
Exulting rode. His helm and mail laid by;  
The sunlike crown upon his head: in robes  
Attired, that like one waving gem appeared,  
Amid the thunder of applauding hosts,  
Onward he came. His coursers' arching necks  
With gems and gold were hung;—and far before,  
Behind, and round his chariot—glittering bright  
With gold and gems, like a phosphoric sea—  
His choicest captains, and his royal guard,  
On their proud treading steeds rode gallantly.

Farewell, thou magnificent city!—thy glory and  
renown have thrilled our life-blood. We have beheld  
thy palaces gem-lit, and thy halls blazing beneath the  
glare of diamond lamps, and thy beautiful women have  
danced by, and the sound of music has stolen onwards,  
and we have scented thy flowery groves, and heard the  
melodies of thy many fountains—farewell, thou splendid  
capital! it may be long before we look upon thy like  
again—perhaps, never. For awhile, thou hast driven  
off the din and stir and cold-heartedness of the world;  
and in thy jasmine bowers we have rested, and drunk in  
the coolness of thy breeze. Farewell—we have loved  
thee. Amid all thy gorgeousandness and revellings, thou  
hadst a noble heart. Once through thy streets were  
wafted on the wind the sigh of repentance and the  
prayer of faith; thou didst then prevail with Israel's  
God; but thy sons grew vile, and thy monarch viler,  
and ye wept not when vengeance threatened; therefore  
hath ruin seized thee, and utter desolation! thy chariots  
and thy horsemen have fallen; thy walls, so massive,  
are in the dust; the gale sweeps by as heretofore, but  
it carries not on its bosom the thousand sweets of thy  
gardens and violet-walks; there is no perfume now;

the stars kindle in thy hemisphere, but no eye upturned from thee watches their spiritual meaning; the moon is there, as of old, but no fond maiden gazes thereon, and thinks of the bridal night; dulcimer and harp have passed away: the loved and loving. Farewell, bright city! the resurrection morn shall dawn, and then thy slumbering multitude shall awake, and instead of finding thee the glory of the world, they shall look upon thy few mouldering bricks, and weep most desolating tears.

Four years previous to the appearance of the first volume of this gorgeous poem, came out his "*Midsummer-Day's Dream*;" a work characterized by the same magnificent spirit: it describes in glowing language the splendours of creation, and the grandeurs of universal nature; the whole production is a symphony of sweetness, deepening and swelling into a storm-like anthem: we mingle with other beings far more lovely than those of earth; we listen to melodies far more exquisite than the lute's softest sounds, or the nightingale's most liquid notes; we behold star after star glittering and gleaming resplendently beneath its own rich golden sunlight; it is the harmony of the heavens—clear, soothing, divine!

Our poet is keenly sensible to all the beautiful influences of the outward creation; his imagination ascends on angelic wings; it paints with all the enchanting colours of the rainbow; the grandeur and the sweetness of his fancy bind us as with the magician's spell.

On the bright and merry day of Midsummer, the poet leaves his dwelling, and after sauntering along wild, grassy lanes, and through hay-fields, and climbing the summit of a steep hill, he lays himself down on



the flowery turf, and with half-shut eyes gazes on the blue expanse of immensity: soon sleep, a soft, sweet sleep falls on him, and thus he dreams:—

A form most beautiful and majestic stands before him, and offers to show him the wonders of the universe. "The air takes fragrance" as he speaks; the offer is joyfully accepted; his ear is opened, and his eye unsealed; and there are sounds, delicious sounds, of divinest music, issuing upward from every tree, and flower, and bank, and hill, and mountain, and river; the harmonies breathed out "like exhalations," or "floated above like perfume on the air;" the winds and clouds, and the "thin moon-mist" mingled their exquisite melodies in creation's hymn.

They immediately are wafted over the rolling waters and beautiful islands of our planet to the North Pole; they gaze on the far out-stretched hills of ice, which glitter in every brilliant hue—the diamond, the ruby, and the emerald—beneath the blaze of the setting sun. The serene eventide came gently on, and the shades deepened; all was still and motionless; the winds had sunk into a soft breeze, and even this was dropping; the twilight darkens, and the western luminary once more bursting from the clouds, lights up the snowy regions with gems of every tinge and colour; the silver stars sparkle in the wide heavens: then comes the music of that spirit-guide, describing in glowing numbers the dashing and the crashing of polar-storms and the glories of the northern winter.

The delicious accents of his lips have died away; they ascend into the air; and pass over a huge continent; and again, the sea rolls, its waters flashing gloriously beneath the light of dawn: they then sink

down and reach its rocky bottom; they look up, and all is one emerald: not a sound is heard. A moment before, and the sun shone in its fresh refulgence in the eastern heaven, and the waves thundered their deep, majestic music; but now there is nought save silence. They look around, and behold the ruins of a gigantic city: some myriad of ages back, and it was the abode of life and beauty; and within its palaces the sound of harp, and dulcimer, and lute was heard, and among its trees and flowers the evening zephyr sighed, and bright intelligence graced its halls and bowers, and the song arose heavenward. Now the melody and dance were gone: silence sat lonely there.

Through rocks hard as adamant they sink and reach the centre of the earth: here are the everlasting fires; on one tremendous arch the hills and valleys have a firm foundation: the flames burst upwards, and roar incessantly; the poet's senses fail; he feels as if that beautiful spirit-guide had departed; and before his eyes stands the ponderous axle on which the world turns its weight: and all around, "beings like statues of hot iron," glare on him; and then the fires faded, and the axle and the mighty thralls were lost in darkness; and on his ear arose the bellowing of the flames, and the rolling of this planet "with the noise of iron clanking:" each sense grew dimmer, and the imagination reeled, when again the sound of the spirit's voice came sweetly.

A storm is raging on the sea; they swiftly ascend, and there is a moan as of dashing waters; it swells loud and louder; the waves toss their spray up to the dark, tempestuous sky; in the fading eventide of the day they behold a vessel sink. Higher still they rise;

the fury of the storm increases; the foam is dashed upwards to the stars; the rain comes down in torrents; the winds howl furiously; the black clouds cover the whole hemisphere; the lightnings flash and flash again, and the thunders rumble, groan, break out in tremendous claps. They still ascend, and pass into the pure ether: he casts back a lingering look upon the earth; the storm seemed but a little point of blackness; and the sleeping vales, and hills dappled with light and shade, and lonely walks, and running streams, and majestic forests, and Eden-isles, and lakes shadowing in their bosoms the high summits of their mountains, looked beautiful and bright. Higher yet and higher; the world is but a star, and a moment more and it is lost in the magnificent assemblage of constellations.

Our sun flashes like a diamond on the sight; near and more near they approach; the scenery becomes vast and gigantic—mountains of ruby, and emerald, and topaz tower above them—forests spread out their luxuriant foliage, and rivers, greater than the oceans of our lowly world, roll with ever-deepening music.

The land blushes with entrancing beauty; and our poet reclines beside a crystal fountain, on a bed of all richest flowers. The scenery around is described with inimitable sweetness: it is one of the most charming pictures imagination has ever conceived; it breathes the air of Eden's pristine bloom; and when contrasted with our fallen condition, it becomes more delicious and soothing; its every characteristic is peace—its every sound the softest melody; and oh! to think that such a creation of the spirit's fancy, and one yet more beautiful will be the inheritance of every child of God, is enough to kindle all the sensibilities of our nature, and stir up all

the faculties of our soul. When we look on this earth, lying in the freshness of early dawn, and glittering with a million gems—when we listen to the songs of the birds in copse and field—when we see the cattle grazing on the grassy hills—when we recline beneath some spreading tree—when we walk out in the still evening, and behold the meadows and straggling lanes fade in the twilight—and when we stand at midnight, watching the burning sorcery of heaven, our thoughts turn onwards to that period when one sweet unsullied home will be ours. “A new world is created, fair as the sun, beautiful as the moon, fresh and verdant as the garden of Eden. And around this new habitation of the righteous is thrown a wall like the crystal wall of heaven itself, within which nothing shall enter to hurt or to defile. There shall be no sickness, nor sorrow of countenance; and there shall be no more death. There shall be no more stormy passion with its troublous calm of overspent rage, and its long wreck of ruin and havoc, which no time can repair. No wars, no rumours of wars; and bloodshed shall never again spot the bosom of the ground; and rivalry shall no longer trouble friendship, nor jealousy love; nor shall ambition divide states, which, be they commonwealths or royal sovereignties, will dwell in untroubled peace. The cares of life shall no longer agitate the bosom, and the reverses of life be for ever unknown. Hunger and thirst shall no longer be felt; and the heat of the sun shall not smite by day, nor the moon by night. Yet will the happy creatures have enough to do, and to enjoy, though there be no misery to comfort, nor evil to stem, nor grief over whose departure to rejoice. Of how many cheap, exquisite joys are these five senses the

inlets! And who is he that can look upon the beautiful scenes of the morning, lying in the freshness of the dew, and the joyful light of the risen sun, and not be happy? Cannot God create another world many times more fair? and cast over it a mantle of light many times more lovely? and wash it with purer dew than ever dropped from the eyelids of the morning? Can He not shut up winter in his hoary caverns, or send him howling over another domain? Can he not form the crystal eye more full of sweet sensations, and fill the soul with a richer faculty of conversing with nature, than the most gifted poet did ever possess? Think you the creative function of God is exhausted upon this dark and troublous ball of earth? or that this body and soul of human nature are the masterpiece of his architecture? Who knows what new enchantment of melody, what new witchery of speech, what poetry of conception, what variety of design, and what brilliancy of execution He may endow the human faculties withal: in what new graces he may clothe nature, with such various enchantment of hill and dale, woodland, rushing stream and living fountain; with bowers of bliss and Sabbath-scenes of peace, and a thousand forms of desporting creatures, so as to make all the world you have beheld to seem like the gross pictures with which you catch infants. Again, from our present establishment of affections, what exquisite enjoyment, springs of love, of friendship, and of domestic life! For each one of which God, amidst this world's faded glories, hath preserved many a temple of most exquisite delight. Home, that word of nameless charms; love, that inexhaustible theme of sentiment and poetry; all relationships, parental, conjugal, and filial, shall arise to a new strength, graced

with innocency, undisturbed by apprehension of decay, unruffled by jealousy, and unweakened by time. Heart shall meet heart, 'each other's pillow to repose divine.' The tongue shall be eloquent to disclose all its burning emotions, no longer labouring and panting for utterance: and a new organization of body for joining and mixing affections may be invented, more quiet homes for partaking it undisturbed, and more sequestered retreats for barring out the invasion of other affairs. Oh, what scenes of social life I fancy to myself in the settlements of the blessed, one day of which I would not barter against the greatness and glory of an Alexander or a Cæsar. What new friendships—what new connubial ties—what urgency of well-doing—what promotion of good—what elevation of the whole sphere in which we dwell! till everything smile in Eden's first bloom, and the angels of light, as they come and go, tarry with innocent rapture over the enjoyment of every happy pair. Ah! they will come to creatures sinless as themselves, and help forward the mirth and rejoicing of all the people; and the Lord God himself will walk among us, as he did of old in the midst of the garden; his Spirit shall be in us, and all heaven shall be revealed upon us."

Our poet now describes the inhabitants of the sun: they are more powerful and beautiful than man; their dwellings are of diamond and amethyst, their chariots look like one living sapphire, their ships are fragrant with undecaying wood, the decks a glowing pearl; the sails of the deepest crimson, and the ropes twisted gold; there is no decay; the forests, and the fields, and the flowers are eternal; the gentle dew, as it dissolves, breathes out the sweetest odour and the divinest music;

their trees seem "pillars for a temple where the gods might worship the One Deity;" and it has bowers rose-crowned, and streams, and emerald banks, and birds of gorgeous plumage, and cities of "inconceivable splendour." Over a boundless landscape they wing their flight, and sink down at last on a mountain's brow: opposite stood a mighty pile, its dome, sky-tinctured and towering up until its loftiest pinnacle appeared "like the twinkling of a distant star;" its gates, "on their diamond hinges turning, gave a sound as of a multitude of harps," and "one deep thunder-note." Three angels issued forth, and uplifted the golden trumpet; "three times they blew; three times from infinite space came the long answers back." Suddenly,

I saw about me  
A countless multitude of godlike shapes,  
Ethereal forms, like my benignant guide;  
And with them myriads of stupendous size,  
Such as the three I had beheld;  
And some of lower stature and more delicate shape,  
With less of majesty, but more of grace,  
And of ineffable beauty. To the first  
They looked what lovely woman is to man:  
Nor, save at the first glance—or when in thought  
With earthly stature measured—did they seem  
Of larger mould; for they were but a part  
In harmony with the majestic whole.  
All that in woman we think lovely—all  
Of dignity, or purity, or grace,  
Was theirs with tenfold charm: the bright, mild eye—  
The locks of radiant gold—the sunny brow—  
The soft and rapturous blush—the rosy lip—  
The smile that maddens with delight—the glance  
That kindles us like the first glimpse of heaven—  
The gentleness—the tenderness. Their robes  
Were pure as light—of every beauteous hue:  
Their presence was divinity; they moved,  
But I heard not their footsteps; they discoursed,  
And it was more than music: all the air  
Teemed with delicious fragrance where they passed.  
Now underneath that awful dome all stood;

A countless host of great and lovely shapes :  
 They stood in deepest silence, looking down  
 With reverential lowliness, like such  
 Who utter inward prayer : on one knee then  
 Sank gracefully ; and, lifting up their eyes,  
 With faces radiant as the rising sun,  
 And voices such as round the throne of heaven  
 Sing sweetest ; mellow as the softest tone  
 Of plaintive nightingale, in the deep calm  
 Of summer's midnight breathing from the woods ;  
 Yet powerful each as the tumultuous sea,  
 Or shouts of meeting armies, thus they sang :—  
 Praises to Him, all bountiful, all good,—  
 Creator of all beauty, all delight—  
 The Infinite, the everlasting God—  
 The One Pure Spirit :  
 He out of light, impalpable, inert,  
 Created us, and made us beautiful,  
 And bade us live. Through ages undecayed  
 We joy in our existence :—pain or grief  
 Come not to us ; but ever new delight  
 Meets us in all we see, and all we do.  
 Who made the sapphire waves of the great deep,  
 And reared the glittering, many-coloured hills ?  
 Who bade the winds breathe fragrance and sweet sounds,  
 And clothed the valleys with perfumed flowers,  
 The trees with all delicious fruits ? 'Twas He !  
 Praises to Him—all bountiful, all good—  
 Creator of all beauty—all delight ;  
 The infinite—the everlasting God—  
 The One Pure Spirit.  
 Glory to Him, omnipotent, all-wise—  
 Only Creator—of all nature Lord—  
 The Omnipresent, everlasting God—  
 The One Pure Spirit.  
 He bade the sun arise from the deep void  
 Of long-enduring night, and circled it  
 With clouds of living fire. He also made  
 The lesser worlds that in their orbits move  
 Unerringly around. The abyss of space  
 He spread out with his hands, and set therein  
 Th' innumerable multitude of stars.  
 All things are from Him—all on Him depend :—  
 He stretcheth out his hand, and new worlds spring :  
 He speaketh, and bright suns have passed away.  
 He only from eternity hath been ;—  
 He only to eternity must be.



Glory to Him, omnipotent, all-wise—  
 Only Creator—of all nature Lord—  
 The Omnipresent—everlasting God—  
 The One Pure Spirit.

Thus, but with words of thrilling power, they sang;  
 And with the chorus, far above, I heard,  
 Filling the immense of that majestic vault,  
 Sounds of invisible instruments :—vast harps  
 Full chording now; now an aerial voice  
 Dropping down crystal notes, or floating round  
 With a pervading power, as if the air  
 Ran over with sweet sounds : now came at once  
 A burst as of a thousand deep-toned trumpets,  
 That all the temple quaked, and then a pause,  
 Such as the tempest leaves when gathering up  
 Its might to rage the more. Anon there rose,  
 As if in the far ether, other sounds,  
 Voices and instruments, in full accord,  
 Yet gentle as the breeze that o'er the meadows  
 Sighs in a still May-night, nor shakes the dew  
 From out the bosoms of the sleeping flowers.  
 Nearer and nearer rapidly it came,  
 Swelling and deepening :—Voices now were heard  
 Chanting in harmony with those below;  
 With utterance distinct, and heavenly sweet :  
 And instruments of glorious tone and power,  
 Such as earth knows not. Nigher still nigher  
 The viewless choir came on :—there was a sound  
 As of a tempest rushing round the dome :  
 Trumpets and cymbals, crystal-toned, and peals  
 As of gigantic organs blowing full.  
 Louder, yet louder it came on : the sounds  
 Deepened and spread like an o'erwhelming flood :—  
 The million mighty voices more and more  
 Arose exultingly :—th' invisible band  
 Drew nigher still and nigher. But, at once,  
 Through all the eternal dome deep thunders rolled.  
 I saw, descending from its utmost height,  
 A dark cloud edged with lightning :—sure I felt  
 As if in presence of the Eternal One !  
 My senses reeled :—the mountain seemed to shake,—  
 The temple to and fro appeared to swing,—  
 The voices and the instruments grew faint,—  
 Then sank at once into an awful hush !  
 I saw the astonished millions on the floor  
 Stretched prostrate—and the dark cloud opening.

This magnificent passage reminds us of Beethoven's immortal Hallelujah chorus in his "Mount of Olives." It is a tremendous burst of the richest music; it is "like deep-toned thunder, blended with soft whispering rain-drops." There is much of the rising grandeur of Haydn's "New Created World:" it is the song of the spheres, the hymn of creation; it is as thrilling to the senses as when a "star gilds the bright summit of some gloomy cloud." It has something of the stateliness of Mozart's minstrelsy; there is the liquid harmony of "dulcet instruments," and "silver stir of strings," and then out swells the gorgeous sounds rolling onwards with the ocean's dash of everlasting waters. Our feelings, when we first listened, enraptured at the strain, were as strangely moved as "when from the naked top of some bold headland, we beheld the sun rise up and bathe the world in light." It was "like the open gate of heaven, through which we saw far-extended gardens of joy."

Our poet seems maddened with the splendour of his own vision, and infuses into the strain a spirit-stirring energy. One has scarcely time to breathe for its mighty sweeps. And what a sublime impression it leaves on the mind of the greatness and majesty of God: the awful hush—the prostrate millions—the darkness breaking into beauty!

Our poet stands again on the mountain's brow: the worship had ceased—the hymn had faded—the music had died away—the temple gates were closed—the glorious intelligences had departed. All was still; the thistle's down floated on the gentle breeze.

Onwards they fly; the sun sinks to a star, and then is lost in the distance; they approach the dim wreck of

a world; its forests remained entire, not a leaf had fallen—the rivers and the ocean were frozen—the magnificent cities uplifted their massive architecture to the heavens—every temple was perfect, and its bright inhabitants lay as if in pleasant dreams. All in one dark hour had perished: some were slumbering beside the crystal fountains, and some on the banks of a once murmuring lake. In the odoriferous gardens reposed a harper with his harp, and on his bosom the form of his own fair one—all fresh, all beautiful as if they were to wake at morn. No perfumes rose from the empurpled flowers; there was no sound of falling waters; the winds slept; not a breeze stirred; the air was “still as an icy sea.”

Again they wing their way, cleaving “the fathomless obscure.” The spirit-guide describes the creation of a starry system; and then ceased, and confusion seized our poet. Gigantic shapes seemed to mock, and then passed away; and beautiful forms came and soothed him; these faded, and the silver luna put on a darkness, and he swept on rapid pinions through the immensity of space. The fires and the lurid flames shot upwards, and sunk again; and there were roarings and bellowings as of some boundless sea. He stood before a glorious sun and its revolving planets; and its intelligences sang a hymn to the spirit of eternal beauty; then it mouldered away “in night and solitude.” He sped onwards, and the face of his radiant guide was oft turned on him, appearing like some full-orbed moon, but more beautiful and bright. Then came the new creation, with its matin song of peace and joy; then all was wrapped in gloom, and there was a solemn pause. “All after was a blank,” a dim, dull blank, as

if "life had been for years suspended." He awoke,  
and—

The sea was whispering quietly beneath;  
The evening breeze was on the hills: and lo!  
Just touching on the rim of the wide waters,  
The sun himself, sinking in lonely grandeur.

## EDWARD IRVING.

" Many people suppose that poetry is something to be found only in books, contained in lines of ten syllables, with like endings; but wherever there is a sense of beauty, or power, or harmony, as in the motion of a wave, in the growth of a flower, that 'spreads its sweet leaves to the air, and dedicates its beauty to the sun,' there is poetry in its birth. If history is a grave study, poetry may be said to be a graver; its materials lie deeper, and are spread wider. History treats, for the most part, of the cumbrous and unwieldy masses of things, the empty cases in which the affairs of the world are packed, under the heads of intrigue or war, in different states, and from century to century; but there is no thought or feeling that can have entered into the mind of man, which he would be eager to communicate to others, or which they would listen to with delight, that is not a fit subject for poetry. It is not a branch of authorship; it is 'the stuff of which our life is made.' The rest is 'mere oblivion,' a dead letter, for all that is worth remembering in life is the poetry of it. Fear is poetry, hope is poetry, love is poetry, hatred is poetry, contempt, jealousy, remorse, admiration, wonder, pity, despair, or madness, are all poetry. Poetry is that fine particle within us that expands, rarifies, refines, raises our whole being: without it, 'man's life is poor as beasts'."—HAZLITT.

To the memory of the great, and holy, and Titanic Edward Irving, we inscribe the contents of this paper; it is a token of our lasting regard and lasting admiration. He was the first man whom we learned to love: the story of his life affected us more strangely than the history of a Dante or a Luther: his was a marvellous tale. Hallowing are the feelings with which we gaze on the portrait of this magnificent man!—there it is,

with his broad, expansive forehead, his dark, black curls, his wild, frenzied eyes, his mild lips, his whole expression of a majestic and gigantic mind. We could look thereon for hours; it breathes so much splendour of intellect, and yet such deep and sincere holiness.

No man ever possessed greater intellectual power with a larger share of true piety; he was a prince in mind and in heart—in thought and in feelings. Ah, he is a prince now among the thrones, dominions, and powers of the blessed world! His very looks struck one as something above the common race; he was an immortal among mortals: he felt himself as the ambassador of the Holiest; he understood thoroughly the majesty of the ministerial character, and to this high but just regard may be traced many of his misfortunes. He knew that it stood alone and unapproachable; before it, kings and nobles were as beggars; it stripped society of its gilded follies, and laid bare the emptiness of its vanities; it had the eye of the Eternal; it looked on man as he is, and not as he is not; it had its station between heaven and earth; it was endowed with privileges greater than those of angels; it was God incarnate—God himself standing up and offering mercy and redemption to a fallen and a lost people; its every note was authoritative—its every intonation godlike; the splendours and the terrors of the Divinity alike upheld it; upon all its parts shone the full, unclouded glory of the Highest; to man it was not responsible—to none was it amenable but Jehovah; he was vouched to support and bless it to the end of time. Such was Irving's opinion of the legate's office; and it was not too lofty.

Our author was essentially a poet—a great poet: the

energy and beauty of everlasting truths glow throughout all his writings. We acknowledge that he is not always sustained, that he is oftentimes weak, and insipid, and even absurd; there are, doubtless, many inferior passages; his soul, at seasons, was divested of its majesty and its grandeur; but is not this common to all genius?—is Massillon always eloquent?—is Fenelon ever winning and subduing?—is there no weakness in Bossuet's thundering denunciations?—is Robert Hall ever exquisite?—is Chalmers faultless? The magnificent outpourings, and the gorgeous outbreaks, and the sublime outbursts of the intellect and heart will not be perfect until we reach the invisible world; there these splendid gifts will be fully developed, and the rapt multitude will speak their applause in the deep-hushed silence. On earth, the purest oratory must necessarily be dim—the loftiest hymn feeble; but when Irving was himself, who so vast and infinite in his creations as he? There is an imperishableness about his every word; they breathe the richest intonations of the highest poetry—they are the swellings of the Divine mind—they cannot pass away, and be forgotten—they are the thoughts of a mighty one—they light up our existence with radiance—they dignify our manhood—they sparkle with a celestial lustre—they burn with an inextinguishable brilliancy; it is the soft sighing of the falling zephyr, and the crash of ten thousand thunders.

In his boyhood, Irving evinced little or no taste for learning—he cared not for books; climbing the mountain-height, and wandering down wild, narrow glens, and looking into the dark tarns, formed his favourite amusement and instruction. He loved to breathe the free air of liberty; creation taught him eloquence and

beauty; the hymn of Nature was whispered in every breeze, and sung in every wild sweep of the tempest: he was aroused—he was stirred; he felt the mighty impulse; he yielded to the powerful influence. From that moment he aspired to be above his fellows; he knew that his proper sphere was to rule; henceforth he gave the energy of his herculean intellect to the study of man; he called around him the immortals, and held long and deep communion; his aspirations pointed onwards to the church; herein he found a resting-place for his spirit: the realities of the unseen world, the sublimity of the redemption, the mild meekness of the Saviour, the fatherly tenderness of God, the pure inspiration and teachings of the Comforter, the first breathing of repentance, the return of the wanderer to the fold, the gratulation of angels, were subjects that absorbed his soul; and he loved: then came a softened radiance, a mellowed lustre, over his majestic courage and tremendous conceptions.

Years rolled away, and Irving was in the zenith of a London popularity; and he had married his first and only love. Princes and nobles crowded to hear his thrilling eloquence: then came the full display of his fearlessness of man; for sin and iniquity he reproved him; he shrank not from his duty as the commissioned legate of Heaven; rank, to him, was a vain bauble; it presented no safeguard against his denunciation of wickedness; in the presence of the Eternal he knew of no distinctions—all the different grades of society were levelled there—crowns and coronets were thrown aside; his spirit scorned to flatter—the beggar and the peer alike trembled before his faithfulness; he felt the majesty and dignity of his sacred office; pride and vanity



were banished, and the glory of his Maker alone filled his heart—its every pulsation beat to his praise.

The splendid Gilfillan, speaking of his pulpit ministrations, says—"His manner also contributed to the charm; his aspect, wild, yet grave as of one labouring with some mighty burden; his voice, deep, clear, and with crashes of power alternating with cadences of softest melody; his action, now graceful as the wave of the rose-bush in the breeze, and now fierce and urgent as the midnight motion of the oak in the hurricane; the countenance, kindling, dilating, contracting, brightening, or blackening with the theme—now attractive in its fine symmetrical repose, and now terrible to look at, in its strong lines, and glaring excitement, and an air of earnestness and enthusiasm which ever presented the impression that it was not a mere display; all this formed an unparalleled combination of the elements of Christian oratory."

But to this master-eloquence Irving added deep and fervent piety; whatever may have been his errors, they were errors of the intellect, and not of the heart; his whole being was devoted to the service of Jehovah; his entire existence was wrapt up in the Holiest; the sum total of his happiness was bound up in the fear of the Lord; his religion was soul-influencing, spirit-exalting—withal, it gave him meekness, and gentleness, and long-suffering; his conduct was as pure as his intellectual stature was gigantic; his moral nature was as conspicuous as his endowments were brilliant; in all things he sought the guidance and the smile of the Everlasting; he was a man of unceasing prayer. "Some few of his contemporaries might equal him in preaching, but none approached to the very hem of his

garment while wrapt up into the heaven of devotion; it struck you as the prayer of a great being conversing with God; your thoughts were transported to Sinai, and you heard Moses speaking with the Majesty on high, under the canopy of darkness, amid the quaking of the solid mountain, and the glimmerings of celestial fire; or you thought of Elijah praying in the cave in the intervals of the earthquake; and the fire and the still small voice: the solemnity of the tones convinced you that he was conscious of an unearthly presence, and speaking to it, not to you; the diction and imagery showed that his faculties were wrought up to their highest pitch, and tasked to their noblest endeavour in that celestial colloquy sublime; and yet the elaborate intricacy and swelling pomp of his preaching were exchanged for deep simplicity; a profusion of scripture was used; and never did inspired language become lips more than those of Irving: his public prayers told to those who could interpret their language of many a secret conference with heaven; they pointed to wrestlings all unseen, and groanings all unheard; they drew aside, involuntarily, the veil of his secret retirements, and let a light into the sanctuary of the closet itself. Prayers more elegant, and beautiful, and melting have often been heard; prayers more urgent in their fervid importunity have been uttered once and again—such as those which were sometimes heard with deep awe to proceed from the chamber where the perturbed spirit of Hall was conversing aloud with its Maker, till the dawning of the day,—but prayers more majestic, and organ-like, and Miltonic, never.”

Edward Irving should have occupied some chair of philosophy; he would have kindled the genius of his

class; the students would have been fired: no dull, prosy man he, but a great and gigantic man; he was as the lightning and the thunder; as the oceanic stirrings, and boilings, and tempestuous tossings during the sweeping storm; his voice was as the hurricane, yet gentle as the breath of a calm, still summer's evening: he would have drawn out their energies, and winged their imaginations, and exalted their deep aspirations; each soul would have felt in itself that it, too, had the powers, and faculties, and divinity of a man: and from under his care would have issued forth mighty and tremendous spirits. We want such men; men around whom the enthusiastic youth might gather in admiration. Why have we strangers, then, in the halls of science and of literature? They look upwards on the magnificent blue of heaven, and on its golden clouds, and refreshing showers, and beautiful rainbows, and see no loveliness, no grandeur; they behold flowers, and trees, and all the glories of earth, and sea, and sky, unmoved and untouched; they are absorbed in the root of a word, or in cold, icy calculations. Can these teach? Feeling, practical men for professors and tutors, and not these withered, unmeaning things! Ill-placed are they in seats of learning. A cry arises from ardent and immortal spirits; choose not ever from the honour list, but look abroad into the world, and elect some massive genius. We go to the lecture-room, and what have we? Dimness, and darkness, and relentless night. On the Sabbath—the sweet, soft Sabbath—it is even worse. Oh, for some storm-like voice to thrill the languid heart and arouse the sleeping intellect. No more empty, and hollow, and sterile prating—vitality, life, existence!

The universities crawl under the iron shackles fabricated by the monkish ages; they move at a slow and creeping pace; their efforts are paralysed; their fellows live under one of the darkest principles of the apostate church—they cannot marry. Ministers of God—ministers of the Eternal—wait some twenty or thirty years, sleeping in the venerable precincts of their college, for a living. At sixty, many, for the first time, go into the forest of this world; and, for the first time, utter their proclamation of salvation. Mark, at twenty-three, they took the ordination vow; they have slept till now. New blood, new life in the universities, or we die!—we are choked—we cannot breathe freely—we cannot respire with ease—a heavy load oppresses us. Some thousands are lavished yearly on men who, sworn to feed the lambs of Christ's flock, idle in their rooms. Awake, awake! rouse yourselves, and break this dreary and deathlike silence. Edward Irving would have long ago burst and shivered every yoke, and tossed their atoms into the air, ocean—anywhere. What, bind a man with your prison-laws, and expect him to live? No: never. Ah, it is sad indeed to walk the city of the dead: dead men crawl about; dead men here, dead men there; dead men in the lecture-room; dead men in the pulpit; corruption spreading, the stench darkening the fair heavens.

The best men in the world should be chosen. Why confine ourselves to members of our own university? We could listen then. Thank God! there are some to whom we can listen with thrilling rapture even now. There would be music; there would be flashings of majestic intellect; there would be deep rolling utterance of imperishable things: they would think more of spiritual

beauty and divine loveliness than of hall and combination-room: there would be openings up of dark-veiled glories; there would be the soft cadence of melody, and mighty sweepings of immortal lyres; ay! and the heart would beat, and the bosom throb, and the soul enrich itself with all fair and glorious things. Life—life; all would be life; and from the pulpit would come the intonations of Jesus, and not sounds of a philosophy colder than a Plato's: in his sweet name would be richest eloquence; in his hallowed truth would be highest oratory. Christless sermons now! Socrates had reasoned better. Earthly—earthly; all earthly. Why is this? Everlasting day, hasten! We call for light—we pray for light; something better than apostolic succession, and saintly confessions, and monkish celibacy, and mathematical and classical triposes is wanted. But forth, O dawn!

Irving, the massive and splendid Irving, should have been seated in some university; it would have been a throne of glory. Such a sovereign, who would not have loved to obey! The deep meaning of those eyes, and the swelling music of those lips, and the tremendous thoughts of that mind, and the gigantic fancies of that imagination, and the hallowed purity of that heart, would have given life and health to millions: there would have been men treading onwards to imperishable renown, with a surer test than the honour list to try them by. The lecture-room would have resounded with the converse of mighty beings; and the rolling organ-notes would have arisen, and deepened, and have burst into forest-like hymns; there would have been gods in communion; the world would have stood and hearkened, and grown wise. Some teachers for

mankind then!—not lifeless, sleeping, sluggish men! Look; see you yon ivy, yellow and sere, hanging trembling on that mouldering wall; it is them—it is them! Now for the green young leaves which are sprouting from the fresh earth—the buddings forth—the new and beautiful verdure. Give us the sun, and they will come: sunshine and showers, and they will spring up and cover the land.

Mathematicalisms and classicalisms reign! Hail, ever hail! We love you and admire, and lowly and most reverentially worship. Stalking shadows, we cry unto you to heal us—to give us health, or we must die. But can you heal?—what, semblances! Ah, no! we fling them from us. Pace your fine old cloisters, saunter in your flowery gardens, take your fill at the dinner-table and combination-room: eat, drink, sleep—what else can ye do? How bring up the young intelligent soul?—how—how?

Old memories of Milton, and Newton, and Latimer, awake;—arise; ye shall teach us what to do; ye love us, and cling to us; we will love you and cling to you. Henceforth, no shadows, but realities!

Men have been amongst us, and we feel renewed: but what will these fellowships avail? Young man, they can teach you nothing. Look within, and listen; there is a voice there which will speak immortal things; cherish, encourage, honour it; mighty and gigantic souls wait on you; commune with them. All freedom, and lofty and sublime intercourse; they will make you great, they will build you up, they will create within you imperishable joy, they will invest the earth with beauty, they will reveal things hidden, and open up things secret. With them, you may live and converse:

they will not despise you; their hearts beat with love; the language of their lips is the sweetest music; they are star-begirted, they shine for ever!

Manhood is surrounded by mystery, and it is sickening indeed to see this fine noble image of the Invisible sink into scholarships and fellowships: better cease to be, than become one of these. Oh, for the storm to arouse! It will come—it must come. The clouds are thronging together, and the low thunders are about to crash. Be not afraid, O reader; creation will suffer not; rather, it will put on a fairer and a sweeter charm; it will do no hurt; it will but dispel the noxious vapours, and open up to us again the clear, serene summer sky. Then will light stream from above. Hast thou seen the leaves, in autumn, fall in myriads to the earth when the trees bend to the hollow blast? So shall fall these things: the deep gust will come, and the withered, lifeless boughs will be shivered, and swept far away into oblivion. Or hast thou seen the swollen river bursting its banks, and carrying seeming destruction on the fields around? The river is now swelling, and ere long, it will break down every barrier, and carry away every obstruction: but fear not, it will but impregnate the land with a sevenfold beauty and fertility. The ocean is rolling onwards; it is even now lashing, and dashing, and billowing, and surging, and raging on the shore, and if we look not to ourselves, it will sweep far onwards, and the ancient landmarks will cease to guide the mariner, or betoken the boundaries of its tide.

But to our orator: how full of sublime poetry is this on the day of judgment:—

But come at length it will, when Revenge shall array herself to go forth, and Anguish shall attend her, and from the wheels of their

chariot, Ruin and Dismay shall shoot far and wide among the enemies of the king, whose desolation shall not tarry, and whose destruction, as the wing of the whirlwind, shall be swift; hopeless as the conclusion of eternity, and the reversion of doom. Then around the fiery concave of the wasteful pit the clang of grief shall ring, and the flinty heart which repelled tender mercy shall strike its fangs into its proper bosom; and the soft and gentle spirit which dissolved in voluptuous pleasures shall dissolve in weeping sorrows and outbursting lamentations; and the gay glory of time shall depart; and sportful liberty shall be bound for ever in the chain of obdurate necessity. The green earth, with all her blooming beauty and bowers of peace, shall depart; the morning and evening salutations of kinsmen shall depart; and the ever-welcome voice of friendship, and the tender whisperings of full-hearted affection, shall depart for the sad discord of weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth; and the tender names of children, father, and mother, and wife, and husband, with the communion of domestic love and mutual affection; and the inward touches of natural instinct, which family compact, when uninvaded by discord, wraps the live-long day into one swell of tender emotion, making earth's lowly scenes worthy of heaven itself—all, all shall pass away; and instead, shall come the level lake that burneth, and the solitary dungeon, and the desolate bosom, and the throes and tossings of horror and hopelessness, and the worm that dieth not, and the fire that is not quenched.

Many have written on this subject, but none more powerfully than our author. It is big with coming wrath and coming woe; and the allusion to all the tender sympathies and tender ties of life renders the picture of despair and everlasting judgment more tremendous in its outlines. The oft-repeated fact is clothed with new force and sublimity; it is as original as it is striking; it is invested with a darker hue, and coloured with a blacker shade, than heretofore; it sweeps on, misery after misery, until it reaches the consummation of never-ending agony.

With what beauty of thought, and chasteness of expression, has our poet depicted the death-bed of the good man:—

The man of God looks to the end of the race he has been patiently running, and beholds the goal at hand; he looks upon



the recompence of reward which is awaiting him, the prize of his high calling in Christ Jesus. The last enemy that he hath to overcome is Death; the king of terrors is to be met face to face. He cannot avoid the combat, if he would, and he would not, if he could. How often in the travail of his soul hath he exclaimed: "Woe is me that I am constrained to dwell in Meshech, and to have my habitation amongst the tents of Kedar! O that I had the wings of a dove, for then would I flee away, and be at rest!" How often hath he not said: "In thy presence is fulness of joy, and at thy right hand are pleasures for evermore. As for me, I shall behold thy face in righteousness. When I awake, I shall be satisfied with thy likeness." And now that his conflicts are about to cease for ever, and his sorrows have an end, he lifteth up his head, because the day of his redemption draweth nigh. In vision, his spirit, already winged to take its everlasting flight, discerneth the throne of God encircled by a ten thousand times ten thousand sons of light; in vision he mingles with the glorious throng; he tunes his harp to the heavenly theme, and sings the song of Moses and the Lamb. Sprinkled with the blood of sprinkling, which speaketh better things than the blood of Abel, he ascends in spirit to the Mount Zion, the city of the living God, making one with the innumerable company of angels and general assembly and church of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven. Ah! how does it grieve his soul to wake once again out of the trance of bliss, to open his eyes once again upon the cold, dull, blank realities of life. The syren world hath no longer any charms for him. He hath proved the falseness of her beauty; he hath seen the glory that excelleth, and hath no eye to look upon fictitious brightness. He hath seen the king in his beauty, and the land that is afar off: how shall he endure to soil his feet again with the base mould of the degenerate earth, to breathe any longer the polluted atmosphere of a world poisoned with sin, and full of the voices of sorrow! In this tabernacle he groans, being burdened. And when the grisly king shakes against him his terrible dart, he openeth his bosom to receive the stroke of grace, saying the while: "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" and, looking up to heaven, he takes his departure, saying: "Into thy hand I commend my spirit; for thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth!"

The gentle putting off of mortality is exquisitely described in this passage: it is a sweet hymn to the power of death; it breathes the soft, soul-like melody of Bryant. We become in love with the mighty giant; he is divested of his terrors. It is a yielding up of our

corruptible, decayed, diseased existence: it is the putting on of our immortal, everlasting being; it is casting away the dross; the receiving the pure, the fine gold: it is the parting with a ruined nature and a ruined world, and entering into a fadeless nature and a fadeless world; it is the rejoining the friends of our childhood, the reunion of our kindred. Ah, and we shall be graced with purity, and righteousness, and eternal beauty; and ere we depart this lower scene, the ministering angels will watch around our couch, and the song of peace will vibrate on the ear, and all the refulgent glory of heaven will open on the eye; and, sweeter than all, the presence of our Saviour Christ will be with us, and the majesty of the Lord Jehovah upon us. Faintings and doubts will all have passed away; fears and sorrows have been for ever removed.

In the same exquisite and simple strain, is the following successful description:—

You have felt, or you have seen, the rapt enjoyment of an aged sire, making a round of his children in their several homes, beholding them blooming and rejoicing in the favour of the Lord, with their little ones encircling them like the shoots of the tender vine. No discords to heal, no sorrows to assuage, no misfortunes to lament in all that have sprung from his loins. What an emotion of paternal glory and pious thankfulness fills his breast!—he looks round upon the numerous and happy flock, bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh, and the tear silently fills his eye, which he lifts to heaven, the seat of God, with a look that would say, Thou hast dealt bountifully with thy servant; now let him depart in peace. One such sight makes a parent forget the care and labour of a long life; one such emotion puts to flight all the fears and forebodings of a parent's heart; his soul is satisfied, the measure of his joy is full.

This beautiful picture is enough to make one forget the turmoil of life, and to throw around the soul one glow of holy happiness. It is sketched and coloured

with the true spirit of the poet; it therefore deeply influences the heart; it appeals to the whole man; its tranquil bliss, its domestic sweets, seize hold of the affections, and bind us with a magician's spell. The jarrings of a sinful world die away unheard; we joy to know and feel that there is such inexpressible blessedness in the cup of existence, such unutterable peace even in our lost and fallen condition. It is not all sorrow, it is not all grief; we have days and hours of sunshine. The tender sympathies of life yield us immeasurable felicity, and the more they are cherished and honoured, so much the greater will be their hallowed and soul-exalting power. The finer feelings of our nature play ever a melody to the mercy of the Eternal.

How sweet is the following argumentation in support of the Spirit's operations; it is literally embued with all the deliciousness of poetry:—

If, then, the truth of God's presence and presidency in our worldly affairs finds for itself universal belief among Christians, though resting on revelation alone, and having no foundation either in sight or perception, upon what plea will they reject the doctrine of the Spirit's presence and presidency in the great world of grace, if it be found revealed with the same distinctness? There ought, therefore, to be no preliminary objection taken to it upon the grounds of its not being perceptible, but the Scriptures should be searched whether it be so or not. Rather, upon the other hand, because it is not perceptible, we should entertain it as more akin to the other operations of the invisible God; for, exalting your thoughts a little, conceive the ways of God; look abroad over the world, and what do you behold? Noiseless nature putting forth her buds, and drinking the milk of her existence from the distant sun. Where is God? He is not seen, he is not heard. Where is the sound of his footsteps?—where the rushing of his chariot-wheels?—where is his storehouse for this inhabited earth?—where are the germs of future plants, the juices of future fruits?—and where is the hand dividing its portion to every living thing, and filling their hearts with life and joy? Lift your thoughts a little higher; behold the sun,—doth he, when preparing to run his race, shake himself like a strong man

after sleep, and make a rustling noise, and lift up his voice to God for a renewal of his exhausted strength? Doth the pale-faced and modest moon, which cometh forth in the season of the night, make music in the still silence to her Maker's praise? Do the stars in their several spheres tell to mortal sense the wondrous stories of their births? Again, turn your thoughts inward upon yourselves, and say if your manly strength did grow out of infant helplessness, with busy preparations and noisy workmanship, as the chiselled form of man groweth out of the quarried stone? In the still evening, when you lay you down wearied and worn out, doth your strength return during the watches of the sleepy and unconscious night by noise and trouble, as a worn-out machine is refitted by the cunning workman? Tell me how intelligence grows upon the unconscious babe; where are the avenues of knowledge, and by what method does it fix itself?

Faithful, we have said, and fearless were Irving's pulpit ministrations; take this as a specimen:—

If you get not the soul's attachments to the world loosened before death, there will ensue such a rending and agony upon your departure, as no loss of country, of wife, or children can be compared with; and if you take not a cool forethought of the future, nor prepare to meet it, there will come such a brood of fears, such a wreck of hopes, as no improvident spendthrift ever encountered. Oh, if the loss of fortune can so agitate the soul, and the loss of fame, the loss of a child, a wife, or a friend—if any one of these things can make the world seem desolate, what conceivable agony, when all fortune, family, friends, and fame shall have left you, to dwell alone in a waste, empty, yawning void of grief and disappointment!

Ye sons of men, if these things are even so, and ye tread every moment upon the brink of time, and live upon the eve of judgment, what avails your many cares and your unresting occupations? Will your snug dwellings, your gay clothing, and your downy beds give freshness to the stiffened joints, or remove the disease which hath got a lodgment in your marrow and in your bones? Will your full table and cool wines give edge to a jaded appetite, or remove the rancour of a rotted tooth, or supply the vigour of a worn-down frame? Will a crowded board, and the full flow of jovial mirth, and beauty's wreathed smile and beauty's dulcet voice, charm back to a crazy dwelling the ardours and graces of youth? Will yellow gold bribe the tongue of memory and wipe away from the tablets of the mind the remembrance of former doings? Will worldly goods reach upwards to heaven, and bribe the pen of the recording angel, that he should cancel from God's books all vestige of our crimes? or bribe Providence, that no cold blast should come sweeping over our garden

and lay it desolate? or abrogate that eternal law by which sin and sorrow, righteousness and peace are bound together? Will they lift up their voice and say, wickedness shall no more beget woe, nor vice engender pain, nor indulgence end in weariness, nor the brood of sin fatten upon the bowels of human happiness, and leave, wherever their snakish teeth do touch, the venom and sting of remorse? And when that last most awful hour shall come, when we stand upon the brink of two worlds, and feel the earth sliding from beneath our feet, and nothing to hold on by, that we should not fall into the unfathomed abyss; and when a film shall come over our eyes, shutting out from the soul for ever, friends, and favourites, and visible things—what are we, what have we if we have not a treasure in heaven, and an establishment there? And when the deliquium of death is passed, and we find ourselves in the other world under the eye of Him that is holy and pure, where shall we hide ourselves, if we have no protection and righteousness of Christ?

It is sure as death and destiny, that if you awake not from this infatuation of custom and pleasure at the calls of God your Saviour, the habitations of dismal cruelty, endless days and nights of sorrow, shall be your doom. Could I lift the curtain which shrouds eternity from the eye of time, and disclose the lazar-house of eternal death, what sleeper of you would not start at the chaos of commingled grief? Dives, surrounded with his eastern pomp and luxury, little dreamt that he was to awaken in torment, and crave a drop of water to cool his tongue. What business has any forgetter of God with any better fare? There is no purgatory to purge away the spiritual dross your spirits are encrusted with, and make you clean for heaven. It is not true, that after a season of endurance, the prince of the bottomless pit will hand you at length into heaven. Without holiness no man can see God: without Christ, no man can attain to holiness. Yet, conscious that you are unholy—deriving no mediation from Christ—deceiving yourselves with no respite nor alleviation of punishment—here you are, listless, lethargic, and immovable!

Men and brethren! is this always to continue, or is it to have an end? If you are resolved to brave it out, then make ready, for a proof to make nature shudder and quake to her inmost recesses. Can ye stand and brave Omnipotence to do his utmost? In this world, where power is muffled with mercy, there are a thousand inflections which ye could not brave. Could ye stand all that was laid upon patient Job?—possessions, sons, daughters, health reaved away; then hope benighted, and the light of heaven removed, and fellowship of friends, and almighty displays of power and wraths? The hardy band of Roman soldiers—and who so stout-hearted as Romans?—swooned every man of them at the sight of one of God's visions. What could ye, were God's judgment-seat displayed, his justice no longer restrained, and his retribution no longer delayed;

every fleet minister of execution ready harnessed at his post, and hell opening wide its mouth, insatiable as the grave, and grimmer than the visage of death. Arraigned, self-condemned, singled out of every crime, solitary, unbefriended, one among thousands; life's pleasures at an end, the world's vision faded, God's anger revealed, sentence passed, judgment proceeding, and the pit opening its mouth on you as the earth on Korah's company, to receive you quick. Can you stand this?—can you think to brave it? Then, verily, ye are mad, or callous as the nether millstone.

Do you disbelieve it then?—do you think God will not be so bad as his word? When did he fail? Did he fail at Eden, when the world fell? Did he fail at the deluge, when the world was cleansed of all animation, save a handful? Did he fail upon the cities of the plain, though remonstrated with by his friend, the father of the faithful? Failed he in the ten plagues of Egypt, or against the seven nations of Canaan; or, when he armed against his proper people, did ever his threatened judgments fail? Did he draw off when his own Son was suffering, and remove the cup from his innocent lips? And think ye he will fail, brethren, of that future destiny from which to retrieve us, he hath undertaken all his wondrous works unto the children of men! Why, if it were but an idle threat, would he not have spared his only-begotten Son, and not delivered him up to death? That sacred blood, as it is the security of heaven to those who trust in it, is the very seal of hell to those who despise it.

Disbelieve, you cannot—brave it out, you dare not: then must you hope, at some more convenient season, to reform. So hoped the five virgins, who slumbered and slept without oil in their lamps; and you know how they fared. Neither have you forgotten how the merchant, and the farmer, and the sons of pleasure, who refused the invitation to the marriage-feast of the king's son, were consumed with fire from heaven. What is your life, that you should trust in it?—is it not even a vapour that speedily passeth away? What security have you that Heaven will warn you beforehand, or that Heaven will help you to repentance whenever you please? Will the resolution of your mind gather strength as your other faculties of body and mind decay?—will sin grow weaker by being awhile longer indulged in?—or God grow more friendly by being awhile longer spurned?—or the gospel more persuasive by being awhile longer set at nought? I rede you, beware of the thief of time, Procrastination! This day is as convenient as to-morrow; this day is yours, to-morrow is not; this day is a day of mercy, to-morrow may be a day of doom.

We must remember that this was addressed to the numberless magnates who crowded to hear him. Their rank, their wealth, their beauty, their splendour, were

of no avail, when the plague-spot of sin was on them. He pleaded with them as with low-born, unlettered men; he reasoned with them as with poverty-stricken, ignorant mortals: he denounced their iniquities, their vanities, their fashionabilities, with boldness and courage; he was a Nathan among the aristocracy; he forced home the truth; he pierced through heaped honours and accumulated distinctions to the soul; he exclaimed, in the burning utterances of his sacred oratory, "Thou art the man!" He was "one who 'strove,' says Carlyle, 'to be a Christian priest in an age most alien to the character'—one who reminded the subtle Coleridge of Luther and Paul—one who stormed on the solitary whirlwind of his eloquence into the very heart of London popularity, and hovered there, unequalled and unapproached, till his own wild breath turned the current—one whose errors were all of the blood, and none of the spirit—the herculean, misguided, but magnificent man—Edward Irving."

## W. L. BOWLES.

"No, the love which survives the tomb is one of the noblest attributes of the soul. If it has woes, it has likewise its delights; and when the overwhelming burst of grief is calmed into the gentle tear of recollection; when the sudden anguish and the convulsive agony over the present ruins of all that we most loved are softened away into pensive meditation on all that it was in the days of its loveliness—who would root out such a sorrow from the heart? Though it may sometimes throw a passing cloud over the bright hour of gaiety, or spread a deeper sadness over the hour of gloom, yet who would exchange it for the song of pleasure or the burst of revelry? No, there is a voice from the tomb, sweeter than song; there is a remembrance of the dead to which we turn even from the charms of the living. Oh, the grave! the grave!—it buries every error, covers every defect, extinguishes every resentment. From its peaceful bosom spring none but fond regrets and tender recollection!"

WASHINGTON IRVING.

A PENSIVE youth has just entered Trinity; the college-book bears his signature and the date 17—. He seems to think of home and home's blessedness; there is strangeness here; fine associations truly crowd around, but still he feels lonely. No wonder: we all feel solitary when first leaving that nest of sweetneses.

In a strange city, the city of the beautiful—once see Oxford, and you love it for ever!—our poet strolls out to look on cloister, and chapel, and ivied wall: novelty may for a time dispel his thoughts of home; Magdalen's tower there rising beside the bridge and limpid stream—some centuries back, and from its top came



the low, solemn voice of prayer, as the fresh May dawned. He rambles in the Merton gardens, and ever and anon catches a glimpse of the ancient pile; how his eye kindles whilst gazing on the magnificence of Christ Church, the grandeur of All-Soul's oratory, and the enchanting opening from the Botanic gate!—and St. John's, and Alban's, and Oriel, and Wadham would claim his praise; and what rich-toned memories of Bernard Gilpin, and Hooker, and Chillingworth, and Evelyn, and Sir Walter Raleigh, and a whole phalanx of bright spirits!

He wanders, one sweet April day, along the banks of Isis; the leaves, with their sunny green, are just sprinkling the tree-tops with beauty; the air is calm and gentle, and there is a dainty loneliness on his spirit; he sends forward his thoughts to that hallowed hour when, in the full outpouring of his love, he will stand at God's altar; and then come dreams of the secluded village and its white cottages adorned with vine and scarlet fuchsia—dreams of its old ancestral hall, and its hoary avenue of elms, and its dark plantation, stretching over many a hill—dreams of its low but beautiful parsonage, with its rose-clustered walls, and its inward peace, and quietude, and blessedness—dreams of its simple church, rearing its ancient tower against the summer twilight.

And thus strolling onwards, he pleased himself, and oftentimes did he feel these blessed scenes in harmony with the fair sweetness of the surrounding existence. Dreaming, he passed by the pink-lipped daisy, and forgot the cowslip; there was the scent of fresh, green grass, and the meadows looked gay with the golden

butter-cup; but his eye was far away, even in the vision of future blessedness: he saw not creation's beauty—heard not creation's melody.

Some eighteen months ere he is to breast the world's storm, two gentle spirits enter his room: he himself felt weak and sickly; they had come to give hallowed comfort; all three looking forward to the church—their purest joy to minister therein.

It will be quite sweet to be thus among our people, continues one—there will be the quiet home, with many a flower budding in its latticed window, and its chaste and holy peace. I should love such a place—just a few pretty cottages and two or three fine old Elizabethan mansions, and then the little church standing on a grassy knoll; this would be very sweet, and one might spend therein his days; we could read Chaucer, and Herrick, and many a lover of nature's beauty, and the years would glide so smoothly, and all so calmly, it will make up for the dreariness of our college-life. Soon, and we shall have taken our degree, and then for the hallowed enjoyment of labouring in the vineyard of Christ; prune the grapes—train the grapes to look upwards on the sun—pluck the grapes; it will be very delightful.

So Bowles and his companions thought. "Let no one wonder at an Idyllic reign or Arcadian world in a little village and humble parsonage. A tulip-tree, whose flower-branches shall overshadow the whole garden, may grow in the smallest bed, and the life-giving air of joy can be breathed from a window as well as in the wide wood under the broad heaven." No doubt the poet recollected through many a year the sweet

silvery tones of the one, and the more pensive and less dreamy speech of the other. It would be a delicious memory.

Tears on that pale cheek—tears, tears. It is the trial-hour. He would press his hand on the fleeting time and stay its flight: but no, it speeds away, bearing on its wing his own beloved. Weep, weep; what else can he do? Weep, weep, night and day: weep for ever!

He enters his solitary chamber one evening, and as the last golden rays threw their fading brightness on his window, he gazes pensively out on tree and flower and cloud, and fancies that death has not really come. He tries to imagine she he loved is near him, and putting his hand behind, as if for her soft, gentle pressure, does he wait in the fond hope that it still may be grasped; and the twilight becomes more solemn, and his feeling more saddened, and his thoughts more melancholy; and, in a wail of grief, he wakes to find himself alone—alone.

That pensive youth stands on yon hill which overlooks the ancient Dover: the castle rises on a bank to his left; the sea is rolling all before. In the distance the cliffs of Calais are beaming in the glare of the setting sun: a white sail here and there on the surging waters; all else quiet and hushed. There is the "blessed zephyr-calm of the evening;" the twinkling star will soon be "reflected in the dew of the violet." One would think this the hour of weeping; the delicious vesper hour, when we may recal the "blue spot in the cloud-heaven of life," when comes the "one pale little remembrance, like the earliest and frailest of snow-drops, from the fresh soil of childhood." This youth looked on the serene eventide, and thought of

her he loved, and he wept deeply. "Even in tears," says Hegel, "lies consolation." And we would deem tears the holiest acknowledgment of the still hour, "the swan-song of the day:" tears, tears—liquid tears, seem in sweetest harmony with the hallowed time. "The softened earthly can unite itself with the heavenly, and this again with a softened humanity." Thus Schelling.

The throbbing burst is over; there is the placid grief. His heart pours out its plaintive warblings; there is relief: he recalls every sweet event, every fond endearment, every still hour of blessedness; he lingers over the path once so sunlit; it had seemed to lead onwards to the beautiful and true; it may lead there yet! "The nyctanthes sorrowful spreads its fragrance after dusk." Gazing out of his college-window—for he had now returned to the holy city—on the profound calm of evening, he feels as one all lonely, and far off from peace; and yet there is an undefined sweetness within,—a divine, melancholy sweetness. "The Indian bees hum themselves asleep at eve in the blue blossoms of the *nilica* or *sephalica*." He takes up the snow-white paper, and looking on the precious letters of his beloved, writes sonnet after sonnet.

In a few months, and he will print. Some college debts press heavily: this may clear them. His spirit is stirred with high hopes: to be read by others, to nerve the soul, to throw beauty over the landscape, a dim pensive beauty, like the "rainbow over the cloudy morning of life," born in the storm, nestled in the tempest—and yet a rainbow still, spanning the wide hemisphere, and casting loveliness on church, and cot, and meadow, and tree, and reflecting its exquisite colours on the little wild flower.

His hopes wax and wane: he will publish, and then he will not; changes ever checquer the mild sunlight of his bosom: there is music, and then discord; sometimes he catches the delicious tones of melody, and he is strengthened; at others, nought save the harsh breathing of untuned notes. Oh, who knows what the poet suffers ere his cherished thoughts meet the world's gaze!

They at last are printed; the youth's eye glistens with light when he beholds his first-born. He had wept; but there is now the joy-glance.

Perchance you have seen, O reader, the fine hospital of Christ, standing not far distant from the martyr-spot, noted in Queen Mary's days. Among its learners these poems have found a spirit who will cherish them.

Such sweet pensive hymns; have you seen them? So tender and yet so manly; quite delicious, amid all this jargon and unmeaning study. Light, heaven, beaming again upon us; and music, hallowed music too. We can bear it now—bear the continual drudgery: but it will soon come, even the free vacation—then fields, then brooks, then skies, then voice of creation, and voice of God! Home, too, that blessed nook wherein blossoms all things lovely and holy. I will write these plaintive strains; you shall hear them: me they have soothed, and I can toil again; yes, even go to the un-intellectual task, having learnt how hard it is to check the full outburst of the soul. To-morrow, and a copy shall be yours.

Thus Coleridge, his large eye flashing with enthusiasm. The blue-coat boys deemed him strange, and pitied him, and told their parents when they returned home how this dreamy spirit loved the gentle heaven-dipped violet better than the highest honours of the

ancient school; yea, how he loved to dream, whole days together, beneath the clear blue sky; and how he ever talked of buttercups and daisies and everlasting beauty, and scorned the tinsel of the prize.

Bowles little thought that one wild spirit was thus cleaving to him, and listening so intensely to his sweet, silvery strain. Joy in thy strain, it will yet soothe many into gentleness !

A beautiful home in Wiltshire: two venerable forms stand leaning over the garden-gate: there is the scent of the rose and hawthorn: a tear trickles down the cheek of that old man. Forty years ago, and the other, pacing the streets of Bristol, was thinking over the sweetness of a youth's poetry, and was determining to hymn the song himself. Many strange events during that long interval. Europe heaves to her centre:—heaves, and again is still. Carnage, and plague, and heroism, and the war-music!—there seems nought save these. How eloquently bright the stars! Wept they when gazing on the dread earth? But voices: listen, voices. Schiller and Schelling breathe placid stillness, while they speak the god-like; Richter, and Herder, and Wieland, so soft, and tender, and liquid in their romantic dreams; Goethe, lofty and magnificent; and Fichte, higher, and wilder, and more daring yet. Voices, voices on the dark battle-field of the old world!

Convulsion, discord, ruin, sweep over the huge continent. When will it cease? Chaos, chaos!—humanity broken and overthrown, and lying in chains. Ah, the moon gleamed down on the shattered divine!—thrones no longer diamond-blazed: thrones, thrones dashed in blood. Dark days, dark eves, dark heavens; no glimmer of the blessed light. Men weep and mourn, and

deem the free forgotten. But voices, voices: listen, voices! they sing of the beautiful and true and restored humanity. It shall grow up into the Holy; and the vast desolate plain shall smile with gentle loveliness; and there shall be everlasting sweetness, and everlasting peace.

Passing—passing away, the din and carnage. There will be joy in hall and cottage yet; joy, bright-beaming, blessed joy! and the peasant shall kneel and pray for the monarch, and the monarch shall protect the peasant. Joy once more—joy, joy, and happiness! And now Southey looks—for it is he—on the quiet parsonage, and the face of that first-loved friend, and bids a sorrowful farewell.

But to the poems. They display much elegance and beauty; they breathe the “soul of melancholy gentleness;” his Christian resignation throws a calm and mellowed softness over every line, “soft as the last drops round heaven’s airy bow.” They move strangely the feelings; they touch deeply the heart; they shape the spirit to their own image, mould it to their own form; they cast their dim shadows over the mind: there is a quiet loneliness. Their sad, sweet melody stills every tumultuous passion, tranquillizes every throbbing desire. How exquisite is this:—

How blest with thee the path could I have trod  
Of quiet life, above cold want’s hard fate,  
And little wishing more—nor of the great  
Envious, or their proud name! but it pleased God  
To take thee to his mercy: thou didst go  
In youth and beauty, go to thy death-bed;  
E’en whilst on dreams of bliss we fondly fed,  
Of years to come of comfort! Be it so;  
Ere this I have felt sorrow; and even now—  
Though sometimes the unbidden thought must start  
And half unman the miserable heart—

The cold dew I shall wipe from my sad brow,  
 And say, since hopes of bliss on earth are vain,  
 Best friend, farewell, till we do meet again.

The spirit is deeply moved whilst perusing such lines as these; their influence is gentle, yet powerful. We feel a pensive sadness; it clings to our sunniest hours and our sunniest joys. The bright, clear sky and the empurpled flowers of summer become tinged with a sombre melancholy. Again, how purely sweet is this:—

How shall I meet thee, Summer, wont to fill  
 My heart with gladness, when thy pleasant tide  
 First came, and on each coomb's romantic side  
 Was heard the distant cuckoo's hollow bill?  
 Fresh flowers shall fringe the wild brink of the stream,  
 As with the songs of joyance and of hope  
 The hedge-rows shall ring loud, and on the slope  
 The poplars sparkle in the transient beam;  
 The shrubs and laurels which I loved to tend,  
 Thinking their May-tide fragrance might delight  
 With many a peaceful charm, thee my best friend,  
 Shall put forth their green-shoots and cheer the sight:  
 But I shall mark their hues with sick'ning eyes,  
 And weep for her who in the cold grave lies.

It seems the last dying cadence of the Vaucluse strain, so exquisitely pensive are its tones. How full of expression is the following, on beholding once again the clear silvery Itchin:—

Itchin, when I behold thy banks again,  
 Thy crumbling margin, and thy silver breast,  
 On which the self-same tints still seem to rest,  
 Why feels my heart the shivering sense of pain?  
 Is it—that many a summer's day has passed  
 Since, in life's morn, I carolled on thy side?  
 Is it, that oft, since then, my heart has sighed,  
 As Youth and Hope's delusive dreams flew fast?  
 Is it, that those, who circled on thy shore,  
 Companions of my youth, now meet no more?  
 What'e'r the cause, upon thy banks I bend  
 Sorrowing, yet feel such solace at my heart  
 As at the meeting of some long-lost friend,  
 From whom in happier hours we wept to part.



Again :—

As o'er these hills I take my silent rounds,  
Still on that vision which is flown I dwell !  
On images I loved, alas, how well !  
Now past, and but remembered like sweet sounds  
Of yesterday ! Yet in my breast I keep  
Such recollections, painful though they seem,  
And hours of joy retrace, till from my dream  
I wake, and find them not : then I could weep  
To think that Time so soon each sweet devours ;  
To think so soon life's first endearments fail,  
And we are still misled by Hope's smooth tale !  
Who, like a flatterer, when the happiest hours  
Are past, and most we wish her cheering lay,  
Will fly, as faithless and as fleet as they !

Such strains bear on their bosom the melancholy whisperings of the cold and quiet tomb ; they produce within us thoughts too deep for utterance. The same pensive beauty marks the other poems of our author ; and it is this, we think, that gives them their peculiar value. How sweetly has he described the season when first he heard the sound of ocean's rolling water, and when first he saw it sparkling beneath the sunbeams :—

I was a child when first I heard the sound  
Of the great sea !—'twas night, and journeying far,  
We were belated on our road, 'mid scenes  
New and unknown—a mother and her child,  
Now first in this wide world a wanderer,  
My father came, the pastor of the church  
That crowns the high hill crest above the sea ;  
When, as the wheels went slow, and the still wind  
Seemed listening, a low murmuring met the ear,  
Not of the winds—my mother softly said,  
“ Listen ! it is the sea.” With breathless awe  
I heard the sound, and closer pressed her hand.

That night I restless passed—“ the sea !”  
Filled all my thoughts ; and when slow morning came,  
And the first sun-beam streaked the window-pane,  
I rose unnoticed, and with stealthy pace—  
Straggling along the village-green—explored  
Alone my fearful but adventurous way ;  
Then having turned the hedge-row, I beheld

For the first time thy glorious element,  
 Old ocean, glittering to the beams of morn,  
 Stretching far off, and westward without bound,  
 Amid thy sole dominion rocking loud!  
 Shivering I stood and tearful! and even now—  
 When gathering years have marked my look—even now,  
 I feel the deep impression of that hour,  
 As one of yesterday.

This is natural, and therefore beautiful. The manner of telling this simple incident is such that we become deeply interested in the mother and her child; we wish to know more of them; we feel them to be part of the family of man; we almost behold the night, with its winds sweeping ever and anon, and its belated travellers. A low murmuring is heard—the parent softly whispers—"Listen! it is the sea"—the youthful poet clings closer, and presses more warmly her hand. Equally touching is the following:—

Though my hours  
 —For I have drooped beneath life's early showers—  
 Pass lonely oft, and oft my heart is sad,  
 Yet I can leave the world, and feel most glad  
 To meet thee, Evening, here; here my own hand  
 Has decked with trees and shrubs the slopes around,  
 And whilst the leaves by dying airs are fanned,  
 Sweet to my spirit comes the farewell sound,  
 That seems to say—"Forget the transient tear  
 Thy pale youth shed,—repose and peace are here."

Nor is this less beautiful:—

Fair moon! thou at the chilly day's decline  
 Of sharp December, through my cottage pane  
 Dost lovely look, smiling, though in thy wane;  
 In thought, to scenes serene and still as thine,  
 Wanders my heart, whilst I by turns survey  
 Thee slowly wheeling on thy evening way;  
 And this my fire, whose dim, unequal light,  
 Just glimmering, bids each shadowy image fall  
 Sombrous and strange upon the darkening wall,  
 Ere the clear tapers chase the deepening night,  
 Yet thy still orb, seen through the freezing haze,

Shines calm and clear without; and whilst I gaze  
I think—around me in this twilight room—  
I but remark mortality's sad gloom;  
Whilst hope and joy cloudless and soft appear  
In the sweet beam that lights thy distant sphere!

It is pleasant thus to sit by one's solitary fireside on a winter's evening, and as night's shadows deepen, to feel somewhat of our poet's melancholy. There is a loneliness about moon, and star, and sky—a stillness—a pensive loveliness. The soft, silvery beams throw their tranquil light on the windows; the fire blazes, sinks, falls—brightens again; our shadows appear and disappear on the wall. Not a breath stirs without; every leaf and every flower, and even the long, deep grass, move not. We watch the rising and the sinking flame: in a half-meditative mood, we think of the former years, and then form churches and mansions in the red cinders, and feel, with Beaumont and Fletcher—

“Nothing so dainty sweet as lonely melancholy.”

Yea, and there is a twilight of the soul, when the hopes of youth have passed away—when the friends who smiled on our infancy have gone down to the grave—when the companions of later years have departed from us, as the ship is loosened from the shore—when our kinsmen have given up the ghost—and when we stand almost the solitary being of a generation; but it is a twilight preluding the fresh and refulgent morning. We may be bereft of all our former delights that our spirit may rise with a lighter bound into the radiance of heaven. The everlasting sun breaks on the horizon; it swells upwards in glory and majesty; its resplendent beam scatters the former dimness; the gloomy shadows are dispelled; every cloud is rolled backwards;

every darkness is dissipated; our countenance is illumed with the sublime verity that man can never die: through the blood of Jesus he lives. We look across the stream which separates this world from the next: the willow and the weeping ash bend low with their foliage on this side the waters; the myrtle and the rose glance in the sunshine on the other. We think of the fair beauty of that clime; already its odours pass pleasantly by us—there is the clematis, and the blue violet, and the eglantine; they are sweet on earth—they are sweeter there. Flowers, they tell of everlasting spring. We strolled through a village the other day; it was the month of February, but the pure cerulean sky and the balmy winds were not of winter; in a window of a pretty cottage stood many a modest flower; to look at them was as if heaven had been revealed; they were encircled with a thousand associations; they awakened the sleeping sensibilities of the heart; they called up delicious dreams: there was the yellow star-shaped primrose, and it told of verdant glades, and long, wild lanes, and venerable churches on mossy banks, and all the enchanting loveliness of summer. They reminded us of those we loved, and our bosom was softened into peace, tranquil as the calm of Paradise; and thus, as the shadows of evening steal onwards, do we look forward to an everlasting daybreak and an everlasting morning; and that dawn shall kindle ere long on our spirit, and the scent of a million flowers, and the singing of myriad birds, and the divine hymns of immortal intelligences, and the welcome of kinsmen, and the smile of tenderness, and the unsullied bliss shall burst forth on our changed and renovated condition!

This hope has soothed us in such hours; we feel our

inextinguishable existence; the seeds of decay are impregnated with the waters of life; the full roll of eventide has sung to us of the better land; we cling to the knowledge—we cleave to the revelation; there is light, as of heaven, in the sunny truth. Overcome with sorrow, and laden with grief, yet loving to dwell upon it, does our spirit take comfort from the thought that the tear falls not, and the broken sigh escapes not, in the brighter world beyond. The twilight becomes an opener of unseen sweets—the revealer of invisible joys; it, indeed, tells us of the dim and shadowy; but it also chants a hymn to the unsullied purity of that fair clime which stretches far onwards from the confines of the grave. The realities of the Eternal are brought before us; they shine out as stars shine out in darkness; they breathe a delicious perfume, as the honeysuckle breathes its richest odours when the evening dews descend; we hold communion with them; there is a deep, thrilling converse—an ethereal power exercises dominion; with the subjugation we become exalted; unearthly tidings greet us—unearthly scenes arise: then are there throbbings of inexpressible bliss—throbbings of everlasting hope.

Our poet's verses on a sun-dial are in his best manner; they recal to our remembrance a scene of youth: the fretted heavens were golden with fleecy clouds; the sun stood in the zenith; the breeze was laden with all sweetest and richest scents. It was an April day; we were out wandering, with no other aim or object than to gather the wild and beautiful flowers, and to hear the songs of the birds, and perchance to look upwards on the blue ether, and think of this our nether paradise. We strolled along, now stooping to pluck a

primrose, and now leaning against some lofty elm; we had not sauntered far, when we came upon a sun-dial; it was a plain but massive pillar; it stood within a lonely wood; the brook at its foot, with its clear, transparent waters, murmured; we gazed thereon with "infant wonderment," scarce deeming it a thing of earth. We were told it measured time—but how, we could not conceive: there were no hands to point the hours; nothing but shadows rolled across its figures: it was something mysterious; the stillness gave it additional influence; it seemed as if creation's heart had ceased to beat; it might have been some dreamland that we were in, so tranquillizing were the sounds and sights of nature. And that stone—that stone! it placed all things under a spell; so simple, yet what influence it had! As we passed onwards, the head and eye were often turned to look once more; we left it unwillingly; we could have stayed for ever. "The deep impression of that hour" subdues us now.

Charles Lamb, in one of his quaint but exquisite essays beautifully says: "What an antique air had the now almost effaced sun-dials, with their moral inscriptions, seeming coeval with that time which they measured, and to take their revelations of its flight immediately from heaven, holding correspondence with the fountain of light! How would the dark line steal imperceptibly on, watched by the eye of childhood, eager to detect its movement, never caught, nice as an evanescent cloud on the first arrests of sleep! 'Ah, yet doth beauty, like a dial-hand, steal from his figure, and no pace perceived!' What a dead thing is a clock, with its ponderous embowelments of lead and brass, its pert or solemn dulness of communication, compared with

the simple, altar-like structure, and silent heart-language of the old dial! It stood as the garden-god of Christian gardens; why is it almost everywhere vanished? If its business-use be superseded by more elaborate inventions, its moral uses, its beauty, might have pleaded for its continuance: it spoke of modest labours, of pleasures not protracted after sun-set, of temperance, and good hours. It was the primitive clock, the horologe of the first world; Adam could scarce have missed it in paradise—it was the measure appropriate for sweet plants and flowers to spring by, for the birds to appportion their silver warblings by, for flocks to pasture and be led to fold by. The shepherds ‘carved it out quaintly in the sun,’ and turning philosophers by the very occupation, provided it with mottoes more touching than tombstones.” But no less sweet is this:—

So passes, silent o’er the dead, thy shade,  
Brief Time!—and hour by hour, and day by day,  
The pleasing pictures of the present fade,  
And like a summer-vapour steal away.

And have not they who here forgotten lie—  
Say, hoary chronicler of ages past—  
Once marked thy shadow with delighted eye,  
Nor thought it fled—how certain and how fast!

Since thou hast stood, and thus thy vigil kept,  
Noting each hour, o’er mouldering stones beneath;  
The pastor and his flock alike have slept,  
And “dust to dust” proclaimed the stride of death.

Another race succeeds, and counts the hour;  
Careless alike, the hour still seems to smile,  
As hope, and youth, and life were in our power—  
Go smiling and so perishing the while.

I heard the village-bells, with gladsome sound—  
When to these scenes a stranger I drew near—  
Proclaim the tidings to the village round,  
While memory slept upon the good man’s bier.

Even so, when I am dead, shall the same bells  
Ring merrily, when my brief days are gone :  
While still the lapse of time thy shadows tell,  
And strangers gaze upon my humble stone.

Enough, if we may wait in calm content  
The hour that bears us to the silent sod ;  
Blameless improve the time that Heaven has lent,  
To leave the issue to thy will, O God.

All our author's writings breathe much of this melancholy sweetness. If he does not raise the soul of his reader to scenes majestic and sublime, nor stir his thoughts by the energy and grandeur of his conceptions, still he never disappoints him; there is ever something pleasing: he calms, soothes, and tranquillizes. We may already feel this gentle influence on our own mind; it has been painful for us to write, so deep has been the gloom and melancholy he has brought over us; he has infused his pensive sadness into our own heart; earth now appears dim and vain; the flowers droop their heads, and the winds moan languidly along; they seem ready to decay; the dark cypress suits us—it should wave over our tomb; but we feel, too, that love can never perish—it is inextinguishable; we take courage; we look upwards. In the ashes of the tomb there is a vivifying power; in the dust of the grave there are signs of everlasting life: that life shall last longer than the stars; they shall lose their brightness, and shall twinkle no longer in the firmament; but it shall grow in beauty and immortal vigour; we then shall regain our beloved ones; we shall be with them for ever. Reader, thine home is there!



## GEORGE CROLY.

"A great profusion of things, which are splendid or valuable in themselves, is magnificent. The starry heaven, though it occurs so very frequently to our view, never fails to excite an idea of grandeur. This cannot be owing to anything in the stars themselves, separately considered. The number is certainly the cause; the apparent disorder augments the grandeur, for the appearance of care is highly contrary to our ideas of magnificence. Besides, the stars lie in such apparent confusion, as makes it impossible, on ordinary occasions, to reckon them. This gives them the advantage of a sort of infinity. In works of art, this kind of grandeur, which consists in multitude, is to be very cautiously admitted; because a profusion of excellent things is not to be attained, or with too much difficulty; and because, in many cases, this splendid confusion would destroy all use, which should be attended to in most of the works of art with the greatest care; besides, it is to be considered, that unless you can produce an appearance of infinity by your disorder, you will have disorder only without magnificence. There are, however, a sort of fireworks, and some other things, that in this way succeed well, and are truly grand. There are also many descriptions in the poets and orators which owe their sublimity to a richness and profusion of images, in which the mind is so dazzled, as to make it impossible to attend to that exact coherence and agreement of the allusions which we should require on every other occasion."—BURKE.

THE genius of this poet is of the boldest and most splendid character; he displays in all his writings, the most trifling not excepted, a profusion of intellectual wealth. Brought up and nurtured amid wild hill-scenery, his mind naturally partakes of its grandeur and sublimity; and even his vast Oriental researches and predilections have not entirely subdued the

ruggedness of his conceptions. Eastern luxuriance and Eastern voluptuousness have not wholly taken possession of his soul; there still remains the fresh, free, vigorous strength of a mountaineer.

His poems will never become popular; they are too gorgeous and magnificent for the multitude; they pall upon the taste; the mind is not ever in a mood to enjoy their massive splendour; it cannot always be on the stretch; it seeks for simpler and sweeter strains. The wild blast of the hurricane—the startling flash of the lightning—the tremendous roll of thunders—the bellowings of ocean—do not always please; they elevate, indeed, the thoughts, but they soon weary the senses; they expand and dilate the being; the imagination is fired; we admire the terrible confusion, and even love for awhile the loud crashings of the storm, but we soon turn with joy to the softer features of an evening landscape beneath an Italian sky; and as the traveller, in the midst of the sublime scenery of the North Cape, with an eye fully capable of taking in all its grandeur and glory, often casts his spirit back to those less rugged and more lovely spots of his own beautiful isle, so do we turn from the more brilliant gushes of minstrelsy to the chaster and humbler music of the heart with a feeling of delight and rapture.

The love of grandeur and magnificence is the ruling passion of our poet, and is discoverable in every production of his lyre; and it is to this very characteristic that they will owe their unpopularity: they will never move the people; they will never enchain the mind of the nation; their rich, powerful music will fall unheeded. To gain their ear and heart, it wants something more lively and simple; sweetness is the charm

that wins them. This is not only true with the writings of poet and of orator, but it is also true with regard to painters. It is not the sublime sketch of the "*Last Judgment*" that enchants, but the humbler drawing of some rural festival: beauty, and not splendour, is the idol. There is, however, no question as to which is higher in the scale of intellectual greatness; the tremendous conception of the future desolation requires a stronger and a loftier stretch of mind than some picture of an English landscape; and it needs a greater bard to sweep the deep, sinewy chords of eternity than the trembling strings of earthly sweets. And yet the latter shall be the favourite with the many; and, indeed, this may be seen in the case of Milton and Cowper; for although the former is so much applauded, and that, too, deservedly, yet we very much doubt if he is as much read as the sainted bard of Olney.

Had our author been less gifted, he would doubtless have had more numerous admirers; there is too much dazzling splendour for the populace; had he less, he would have been better known. He indeed works powerfully on a few master-minds; to them he gives new impulses; but with the multitude, he, as it were, has no existence; the names and songs of his humbler brethren are in every one's mouth—they are household words.

Paris in 1815 is Croly's principal poem: it has more of the solemn and stately grandeur than the gorgeous; there is a lofty tone running through the whole. His cities are marble; his people, moving statues. It is prefaced by a splendid dissertation on the French revolution; it is in perfect accordance with what follows. How characteristic of its author is the following

description of the worship in Notre Dame; and then the reference to the simpler service of the village churches of England :—

The organ peals ; at once, as some vast wave,  
 Bend to the earth the mighty multitude,  
 Silent as those pale emblems of the grave  
 In monumental marble round them strewed.  
 Low at the altar, forms in cope and hood  
 Superb with gold-wrought cross and diamond twine,  
 Life in their upturned visages subdued,  
 Toss their untiring censers round the shrine,  
 Where on her throne of clouds the Virgin sits divine.  
 But only kindred faith can fitly tell  
 Of the high ritual at that altar done,  
 When clashed the arms, and rose the chorus-swell,  
 Then sank, as if beneath the grave 'twere gone ;  
 Till broke the spell the mitred abbot's tone,  
 Deep, touching, solemn, as he stood in prayer  
 A dazzling form upon its topmost stone,  
 And raised with hallowed look, the Host in air,  
 And blessed with heavenward hand the thousand kneeling there.  
 Pompous ! but love I not such pomps of prayer ;  
 Ill bends the heart 'mid mortal luxury.  
 Rather let me the meek devotion share,  
 Where in their silent glens and thickets high,  
 England, thy lone and lowly chapels lie.  
 The spotless table by the eastern wall,  
 The marble, rudely traced with names gone by,  
 The pale-eyed pastor's simple, fervent call ;  
 Those deeper wake the heart, where heart is all in all.  
 If pride be evil ; if the highest sighs  
 Must come from humblest hearts ; if man must turn  
 Full on his wreck of nature to be wise ;  
 If there be blessedness for those that mourn ;  
 What speak the purple gourds that round us burn ?  
 Ask of that kneeling crowd whose glances stray  
 So restless round on altar, vestment, urn ;  
 Can guilt weep there ? can mild repentance pray ?  
 Ask, when this moment's past, how runs their Sabbath-day !  
 Their Sabbath-day ! alas ! to France that day  
 Comes not ; she has a day of looser dress,  
 A day of thicker crowded ball and play,  
 A day of folly's hotter, ranker press ;  
 She knoweth not its hallowed happiness,  
 Its eve of gathered hearts and gentle cheer.

Throughout the whole of this there is dignity: it is deeply coloured with the stateliness of his own mind. There is not a line which is not full and sonorous, we had almost said pompous. Even when the poet alludes to the religious peasantry of England, and the beautiful and sunny spots on which so many of their churches stand—when he speaks of the calm, unruffled peace—their hours, so soft and spirit-like, of Sabbath rest—their fervid aspirations after the pure and holy—their simple but heart-breathing services—their sigh of deep contrition—their plea for pardon—their entire reliance on Jesus—their spiritual hymns, we have the same majestic roll of music; there is little or no diminution in its solemn movement; there is no sweet, low pause; no gentle hush. The gorgeous ceremonies of the apostate church are more in accordance with his muse than the lovelier ritual of our own. And even here he is not so much at home as in pictures of sullen grandeur. His best poems remind one of the setting of the sun amid a brooding storm; the cry of the sea-gull—the dark clouds—ever and anon a streak of bluish white—the crimson and the gold in the western sky—the tempestuous breeze—the lashing of the waters, often combine to form a scene of wild and strange magnificence.

I had a vision: evening sat in gold  
Upon the bosom of a boundless plain,  
Covered with beauty; garden, field, and fold,  
Studding the billowy sweep of ripening grain,  
Like islands in the purple summer main,  
And temples of pure marble met the sun,  
That tinged their white shafts with a golden stain,  
And sounds of rustic joy, and labour done,  
Hallowed the lovely hour, until her pomp was gone.

The plain was hushed in twilight, as a child  
Slumbers beneath its slow drawn canopy;  
But sudden trappings came, and voices wild,

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And tossing of rude weapons caught the eye ;  
 And on the hills, like meteors in the sky,  
 Burst sanguine fires, and ever and anon  
 To the clashed spears the horn gave fierce reply ;  
 And round their beacons trooping thousands shone,  
 Then sank, like evil things, and all was dark and lone.

'Twas midnight ; there was wrath in that wild heaven :  
 Earth was sepulchral dark. At once a roar  
 Pealed round the mountain-tops, like ocean driven  
 Before the thunders on th' eternal shore :  
 Down rushed—as if a sudden earthquake tore  
 The bowels of the hills—a flood of fire.  
 Like lava, mingled spears and torches pour,  
 The plain is deluged, higher still and higher,  
 Swell blood and flame, till all is like one mighty pyre.

'Twas dawn, and still the black and bloody smoke  
 Rolled o'er the champaign like a vault of stone :  
 But as the sun's slow wheels the barrier broke,  
 He lit the image of a fearful one,  
 Throned in the central massacre, alone—  
 An iron diadem upon his brow,  
 A naked lance beside him, that yet shone  
 Purple and warm with gore, and crouching low,  
 All men in one huge chain, alike the friend and foe.

The land around him, in that sickly light,  
 Showed, like th' upturning of a mighty grave ;  
 Strewn with crushed monuments, and remnants white  
 Of man ; all loneliness, but when some slave  
 With faint, fond hand the hurried burial gave,  
 Then died. The Despot sat upon his throne,  
 Scoffing to see the stubborn traitors wave  
 At his least breath. The good and brave were gone  
 To exile or the tomb. Their country's life was done !

Perhaps the first of the following pieces is as free  
 from this stately music as any ; but the second exhibits  
 it in a high degree. They are both on Evening ; the  
 one displaying its sweet, unruffled quietude, and the  
 other, its sullen and tempestuous glory :—

Look on these waters, with how soft a kiss  
 They woo the pebbled shore ! then steal away,  
 And die in music ! There, the bending skies  
 See all their stars,—and the beach-loving trees,  
 Oziers and willows, and the watery flowers,

That wreathe their pale roots round the ancient stones,  
Make pictures of themselves !

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There is a gloomy grandeur in the sun,  
That levels his last light along the shore ;  
The clouds are rolling downwards, stern and dun ;  
The long, slow wave is streaked with red, like gore  
On some vast field of battle, and the roar  
Of wave and wind comes like the battle's sound.  
And now the sun sinks deeper ; and the clouds,  
In folds of sullen fire, still heavier lower ;  
Till the whole storm the shore and ocean shrouds.

Croly's "Sebastian" is a fine Spanish romance, well told, though often negligent in the construction of its verse; it abounds with splendid passages; perhaps the one on the Alhambra is the most gorgeous. Much of his poetry, however, is descriptive of the beauty and glory of the East; in it we discover the wonderful resources of his mind. He has woven the high-wrought superstitions of Araby and its adjacent countries into a woof of magnificent texture.

It is not unfrequently pleasant to read the tales that abound in eastern lands; they may be very improbable, but they are not on that account the less beautiful. Besides angels, the Mahometans believe in a race of beings which form, as it were, a link between man and the celestial spirits, composed of soul and body, but higher and more ethereal. Many are the exquisite stories we have concerning these; and we cannot but admire them when they come to us clothed in all the softness and voluptuousness of the East. They scent of the odoriferous spices of Arabia. We delight in reading of their magnificent palaces—their flowery gardens—their cooling streams—their million fountains—their myriad gems—their wide, outspread heavens—their citron and their olive groves—their stately temples—their faithful and constant loves.

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There is an unearthly splendour cast over each. How often did we listen to these marvellous stories in our childhood! and in our later years they have not completely left us; something of their fragrance remains.

We cannot think even of the orient clime without our imagination being somewhat tinged with its fair beauty. "The gold of that land is good." But to nothing do we turn with greater delight than to its traditions respecting the angels: one of these our poet has chosen as a fitting theme for his lyre. It is related in the Koran that two angels, Haruth and Maruth, having spoken in contemptuous tones of man's weakness in resisting temptation, were sent down to earth that their own firmness and purity might be tested. They surmount every trial, and are about to re-ascend to their blissful abode, when a spirit, in the form of a woman, plies her wiles to seduce: she fails, until she persuades them to taste the wine-cup, when she completely triumphs; and in their folly, they reveal the words by which men are elevated to angels. The punishment quickly follows, and they are for ever exiled from heaven.

Our poet makes a little alteration. Instead of two spirits, he narrates only the overthrow of one: the tale is thereby simplified and interest increased. He also mitigates the severe judgment, and the angel is partly forgiven. The poem is literally crowded with diamonds, and pearls, and amethysts, and rubies, and sapphires, and roses, and lilies, and amaranths, and palms, and cedars, and frankincense, and myrrh, and cloudless skies, and balmy evenings, and gentle music, and tones of deepest tenderness. We deem it the most magnificent of his productions.



The angel of the world was seated on a lofty tower near Damascus; the time of his departure was at hand; temptations had assailed in vain; his faith was still pure; his holiness stood vouched; it was unblemished; it shone brighter for the trial; he felt joyous in conscious innocence; he looked forward to the garden-land of Paradise; his triumph was at hand; he had undergone the fiery ordeal, and he had come out a gem of more brilliant lustre; his former boastful words were nearly accomplished, his vaunt nearly fulfilled. But one other test awaited him:—

The sun was slowly sinking to the west,  
 Pavilioned with a thousand glorious dyes;  
 The turtle-doves were winging to the nest  
 Along the mountain's soft declivities;  
 The fresher breath of flowers began to rise,  
 Like incense, to that sweet departing sun;  
 Faint as the hum of bees the city's cries:  
 A moment, and the lingering disk was gone;  
 Then were the angel's task on earth's dim orbit done.

Oft had he gazed upon that lovely vale,  
 But never gazed with gladness such as now;  
 When on Damascus' roofs and turrets pale  
 He saw the solemn sunlight's fainter glow,  
 With joy he heard the Imaun's voices flow  
 Like breath of silver trumpets on the air,  
 The vintager's sweet song, the camel's low,  
 As home they stalked from pasture, pair by pair,  
 Flinging their shadows tall in the deep sunset glare.

Then at his sceptre's wave, a rush of plumes  
 Shook the thick dew-drops from the roses' dyes;  
 And, as embodying of their waked perfumes,  
 A crowd of lovely forms, with lightning eyes,  
 And flower-crowned hair, and cheeks of paradise,  
 Circled the bower of beauty on the wing;  
 And all the grove was rich with symphonies  
 Of seeming flute, and horn, and golden string,  
 That slowly rose, and o'er the mount hung hovering.

The angel's glance was thrown upwards to the blue vault; his wings expanded; already his flight was begun. He turned his countenance on the plain beneath,

and there was a suppliant on her knees. Wrath darkened his fair, bright face, but it soon regained its sunny radiance. She stated her petition: she had vowed to close her dying parent's eyes, and on the way, the caravan was stopped, and her little wealth made the prize of the robbers: he cast a priceless gem to the lowly pilgrim, and prepared again for his return heavenward. She still knelt; he bade her "be happy, and begone:"—

The weeper raised the veil; a ruby lip  
First dawned: then glowed the young cheek's deeper hue,  
Yet delicate as roses when they dip  
Their odorous blossoms in the morning dew:  
Then beamed the eyes, twin stars of living blue,  
Half shaded by the curls of glossy hair,  
That turned to golden as the light wind threw  
Their clusters in the western golden glare.  
Yet was her blue eye dim, for tears were standing there.

The angel gazed upon the lovely one, and she deeply blushed, and stooping, plucked a flower, and laid it on the footstool of the throne. "Her sighs were richer than the rose they fanned." By command he could not accept the gift without staining the purity of his judgment-seat; it lay untouched. The pilgrim cast upwards an upbraiding glance; a dizziness came; his spirit was enwrapt in a dream of forgetfulness; yet still he heard the voice of the suppliant sweeter than the sweetest melody.

Consciousness returned: he touched the beautiful offering, and bade farewell. In a moment, and deep thunders rolled and crashed; a mist gathered in the vale, and enveloped the mountain; the storm raged, the dim vapours seemed as many waters; a ship heaved on its dashing waves; its sail was silken, and its guide a lovely woman: suddenly it plunged beneath the roar-

ing billows, and the tempest ceased. The angel knew the symbol, but still gazed on the fatal flower, and the pilgrim, with her "small, unsandaled feet, shining like silver on a floor of rose:"—

A simple Syrian lyre was on her breast,  
And on her crimson lip was murmuring  
A village strain, that in the day's sweet rest  
Is heard in Araby, round many a spring,  
When down the twilight vales the maidens bring  
The flocks to some old patriarchal well;  
Or where, beneath the palms, some desert king  
Lies, with his tribe around him as they fell!  
The thunder burst again, a long, deep, crashing peal.

The angel heard not:—

He heard not even the strain, though it had changed  
From the calm sweetness of the holy hymn:  
His thoughts from depth to depth unconscious ranged,  
Yet all within was dizzy, strange, and dim;  
A mist seemed spreading between heaven and him;  
He sat absorbed in dreams—a searching tone  
Came on his ear; oh how her dark eyes swim  
Who breathed that echo to a heart undone,  
The song of early joys, delicious, dear, and gone!

Again it changed: but now 'twas wild and grand—  
The praise of hearts that scorn the world's control,  
Disdaining all but Love's delicious band,  
The chain of gold and flowers, the tie of soul!  
Again strange paleness o'er her beauty stole;  
She glanced above, then stooped her glowing eye,  
Blue as the star that glittered by the pole;  
One tear-drop gleamed, she dashed it quickly by,  
And dropped the lyre, and turned—as if she turned to die.

The night-breeze swept up the mountain's sides; the clouds in the western heaven seemed as some huge palace lighted up with golden sunbeams and amethystine tints. The angel had lost his eye for grandeur; his heart was with the being that so sweetly kneeled at his feet. Would the flowery clime be happiness without her?—would earth not be paradise with her?—were thoughts that disturbed the settled rest of his soul. A

storm again arose, and the whirlwind dashed out its gloomy sounds; the fair moon waned, and the stars lost their brightness.

The angel sat enthroned within a dome  
Of alabaster, raised on pillars slight,  
Curtained with tissues of no earthly loom;  
For spirits wove the web of blossoms bright,  
Woof of all flowers that drink the morning light,  
And with their beauty figured all the stone  
In character of mystery and night,  
A more than mortal guard around the throne,  
That in their tender shade one glorious diamond shone.  
And every bud round pedestal and plinth,  
As fell the evening, turned a living gem.  
Lighted its purple lamp the hyacinth,  
The dahlia poured its thousand-coloured gleam,  
A ruby torch the wandering eye might deem  
Hung on the brow of some night-watching tower,  
Where upwards climbed the broad magnolia's stem—  
An urn of lovely lustre every flower,  
Burning before the king of that illumined bower.  
And nestling in that arbour's leafy twine,  
From cedar's top to violet's lowly bell,  
Were birds, now hushed, of plumage all divine;  
That, as the quivering radiance on them fell,  
Shot back such hues as stain the orient shell,  
Touching the deep, green shades with light from eyes  
Jacinth, and jet, and blazing carbuncle,  
And gold-dropt coronets, and wings of dyes  
Bathed in the living streams of their own paradise.

The angel heeded not the warning, the deep witchery of the suppliant spell-bound him; night's gloomy shadows had fallen on hill, and plain, and proud Damascus; there was no stir in the city; the maiden's foot had ceased to tread her streets, and the voice of song had died away; the poor man alike with the rich slept soundly, and forgot his troubles, or perhaps in fairy dream beheld some beautiful home, with its wide-extended garden, his own; darkness was in the horizon, but celestial light was in the bower; the expression of the pilgrim's

eye became loftier, but not less sweet. She rose, and with one arm pointing to the sky, approached him nearer; then plucking "a cluster from the vine" which threw its light, transparent leaves around beneath the golden radiance, she pressed its juice into a crystal chalice, and offered it to the angel. His countenance darted fire, and she tottered as if wounded to the heart; he sprang forwards, and caught her in his arms, and drank the contents of the cup, which she still had strength to offer; once more she fixed on his bending form "the beam of her deep, dewy, melancholy eye." Another warning was given—they stood as if sadness had taken possession of their souls; the Angel felt his guilt; but she, "in a voice as sweet as the murmuring of summer streams beneath the moonlight's glance," besought him to reveal the unknown words. Her delicious beguilements prevailed, and he uttered the sentence; the heavens resounded with hollow thunders, and the clouds gave forth the lightnings; the rain dashed downwards to the earth, and the plain and the mountain smoked beneath the terrible storm.

The seducer proves to be Eblis, who having re-assumed his shape, pronounces his doom—to remain on earth until it is once again covered with the innocence and pristine beauty of paradise and the peaceful loveliness of its birth hour.

We think this is the most exquisite Arabian fiction we have ever read: it is sweetly sung; and of all songs bearing an Oriental origin and cast, we deem this one of the finest. There are several other poems which are distinguished as having issued from the same source; and we cannot leave the odoriferous ground of the East without quoting our author's lines on the

“Dream of Jacob.” We cannot forget, too, that the events which interested and delighted us most in childhood were witnessed by an Asiatic sky; the touching histories of the Bible belong to these lands—with them they are for ever associated; and one of the most thrilling of these is the account of Jacob. Sent out at an early age, friendless and alone, with nothing but the blessing of his father, he toiled onwards towards the home of his uncle Laban; the twilight was deepening into night, and the heaven sending out her myriad stars, when he took a stone, and placing it as a pillow, laid himself down to rest :—

The sun was sinking on the mountain-zone  
That guards thy vales of beauty, Palestine !  
And lovely from the desert rose the moon,  
Yet lingering on the horizon's purple line,  
Like a pure spirit o'er its earthly shrine.  
Up Padan-aran's height, abrupt and bare,  
A pilgrim toiled, and oft on day's decline  
Looked pale, then paused for eve's delicious air ;  
The summit gained, he knelt and breathed his evening prayer.  
He spread his cloak and slumbered—darkness fell  
Upon the twilight hills ; a sudden sound  
Of silver trumpets o'er him seemed to swell ;  
Clouds heavy with the tempest gathered round,  
Yet was the whirlwind in its caverns bound ;  
Still deeper rolled the darkness from on high,  
Gigantic volume upon volume wound—  
Above, a pillar shooting to the sky ;  
Below, a mighty sea, that spreads incessantly.  
Voices are heard—a choir of golden strings ;  
Low winds, whose breath is loaded with the rose ;  
Then chariot-wheels—the nearer rush of wings ;  
Pale lightning round the dark pavilion glows :  
It thunders—the resplendent gates unclose.  
Far as the eye can glance, on height o'er height,  
Rise fiery waving wings, and star-crowned brows,  
Millions on millions, brighter and more bright,  
Till all is lost in one supreme, unmingled light.  
But two beside the sleeping pilgrim stand,  
Like cherub-kings, with lifted, mighty plume,

Fixed, sun-bright eyes, and looks of high command :  
They tell the patriarch of his glorious doom ;  
Father of countless myriads that shall come,  
Sweeping the land like billows of the sea,  
Bright as the stars of heaven from twilight's gloom,  
Till He is given whom angels long to see,  
And Israel's splendid line is crowned with Deity.

Such is the vision that appeared to the weary pilgrim. He arose in the morning, and raised a monument with the stone, in commemoration of the event, and vowed that if he returned to his home again in peace, the Lord should be his God. He still toiled onwards, but doubtless with a lighter heart. Before his dream, his mind would naturally be sad; it would often recur to the past; the retreat of infancy would exert a powerful influence in deepening that melancholy; the fear of his incensed brother would press upon him; and as he turned around upon the setting glories of the first day, he would be absorbed by pensive reflections: he was homeless—he was houseless. But now he could go on his way rejoicing; the star of hope had beamed; the Deity had appeared; his gloom would be exchanged for a delightful anticipation; and in the magnificence of the Eternal's promise, he would almost forget his former fears and sorrows, and even the face of those he loved.

He arrived at Laban's, "and he looked, and behold a well in the field, and lo, there were three flocks of sheep lying by it; for out of that well they watered the flocks: and a great stone was upon the well's mouth. And thither were all the flocks gathered: and they rolled the stone from the well's mouth, and watered the sheep, and put the stone again upon the well's mouth in his place. And Jacob said unto them, My brethren, whence

be ye? And they said, Of Haran are we. And he said unto them, Know ye Laban the son of Nahor? And they said, We know him. And he said unto them, Is he well? And they said, He is well: and behold Rachel his daughter cometh with the sheep. And he said, Lo, it is high day, neither is it time that the cattle should be gathered together: water ye the sheep, and go and feed them. And they said, We cannot, until all the flocks be gathered together, and till they roll the stone from the well's mouth; then we water the sheep. And while he yet spake with them, Rachel came with her father's sheep: for she kept them. And it came to pass, when Jacob saw Rachel the daughter of Laban, his mother's brother, and the sheep of Laban his mother's brother, that Jacob went near, and rolled the stone from the well's mouth, and watered the flock of Laban his mother's brother. And Jacob kissed Rachel, and lifted up his voice and wept. And Jacob told Rachel that he was her father's brother, and that he was Rebekah's son: and she ran and told her father. And it came to pass, when Laban heard the tidings of Jacob his sister's son, that he ran to meet him, and embraced him, and kissed him, and he brought him to his house. And he told Laban all these things."

How beautiful is his love for Rachel; pure and spotless as anything on earth. The man is under the smile of heaven: he daily increases in wealth, and in a few years becomes a powerful prince. We pass over the interesting and touching records of his life—his wrestling with the angel at Peniel, and refusing to let him go until blessed—his meeting with his brother Esau—his establishment in the land of Canaan—his love of Joseph—all these beautiful records belong to



the East. They are entwined around its dells, and plains, and mountains, and streams. Well may we love the oriental region; well may it kindle all our enthusiasm, and all our hopes; much of its ground is sacred; it teems with hallowed associations; and on its soil the Incarnate trod, preaching "deliverance to the captive, and the opening of prison-doors to those that are bound."

## JAMES GRAHAME.

"With silent awe I hail the sacred morn,  
That scarcely wakes while all the fields are still;  
A soothing calm on every breeze is borne,  
A graver murmur echoes from the hill,  
And softer sings the linnet from the thorn;  
The skylark warbles in a tone less shrill.  
Hail, light serene! hail, sacred Sabbath morn!  
The sky a placid yellow lustre throws;  
The gales that lately sighed along the grove  
Have hushed their drowsy wings in dead repose;  
The hovering rack of clouds forgets to move:  
So soft the day when the first morn arose."

LEYDEN.

AFTER perusing the immortal Milton, and beholding the magnificence and sublimity of the celestial worlds pictured to the imagination by his master-spirit; after accompanying Atherstone in his dream of suns and systems replete with life and loveliness; and after sweeping immensity, vast and infinite, with Byron in his "Cain," we are refreshed by the tender lays of Grahame—his perception of beauty, and his calm and holy Sabbath scenes; we are once more drawn to earth, and find that it still bears marks of pristine grace, and still has moments of heavenly peace. And, oh, had not sin tainted our very nature, what a land of rest had ours not been!—had iniquity not entered, the intellect would

have been pure and lofty, the image of the Invisible ; with angels we should have held communion: the shadowy eventide would have beheld the converse; the twilight star would have looked down upon the fair and hallowed intercourse. But rebellion lifted up its standard; then followed the curse; the mind mouldered, it became a dim, dark ruin; where once the bright thought played, crawled the vampire. Think we what eloquence we have lost! the tongue now cannot disclose its burning language. The poet's fire burns dimly—beauty has faded—the eye forgets its utterance—the countenance, which erst was radiant with high resolve, is clouded—song is hushed—the lyre's strings are unchorded—the domestic affections are sullied. Ah, and who can tell what these would have been, had we remained perfect? who paint their untainted sweets? There would have been no anger to break the melody of their reign; no jarring sound to lacerate the heart: all would have been one fond swell of inexpressible bliss. The lips would have disclosed the passion of the soul; the atmosphere would have been perfumed with love's richest incense; its clear blue sky would have never been shadowed with unkindness; no discord would have been heard. There would have been hopes, but hopes springing from inherent purity; there would have been struggles, but struggles after a higher blessedness.

Our evenings, sin-infected as they are, are beautiful; but what would have been their enchanting loveliness, had we continued our homage to the Eternal? Even now, Eden arises before us clothed with the soft grey of twilight; on yonder bank reposes the lion and the lamb; the dark majestic cedars cast their umbrage on

the rippling waters; there are flowers of every hue and every clime. Along that winding walk stroll the happy pair; the sky is dimpled with the golden clouds of sunset. Presently a silver spot radiates in the empyrean: it brightens, enlarges, expands. Music slowly breaks; it is the melody of heaven. Gentle voices are heard. We gaze; we listen. In the firmament we behold the angels of the Highest: the fair intelligences alight, and are greeted by man; they turn towards the magnificent west. Hark, the vesper hymn sweeps upwards to the Throne!

But we have one season left sweeter than Eden's sweetest hours. If sin blighted the flowery Paradise, and nipped its odoriferous fruits, Christ has also thrown over the earth a more beautiful and enchanting grace: the dew of the fairer land is on us; the sun of the better world shines in our horizon; the gales of the soft and peaceful clime breathe ever and anon their incense; the ground once more scents with eternal flowers: immortality is ours. The sigh of repentance, and the tear of penitence, and the voice of faith tend upwards. One day in seven is given us; we then rest. Delicious bliss is bestowed; Heaven pours out its unruffled serenity.

The calm and quiet Sabbath is the theme of our poet; the strings of his harp are tuned to its sweetest melody. The pious soul feels the influence of his strain; its very name is music sweeter than Israfl; its bliss is assimilated with that of heaven. The anthem of worship rolls upwards from every star; the matin song issues from the lips of countless intelligences. The thrones, and principalities, and powers, utter the praises of the Immortal. And now from this earth may be

heard the tender whisperings of love, and the swell of a mighty chorus to the Creator; the murmurings of rebellion cease; the flag of iniquity is lowered; the hoarse discord dies away; the haughty defiance is carried on the breeze no longer. Man stands and hearkens. The homage-hymn deepens every hour. There is the sound of inextinguishable joy: Creation brightens; the reign of sin waxes feeble; oppression is overthrown.

It is beautiful to behold the sun arise, scattering his radiant beams on a world teeming with loveliness, while the peace of the King sweeps onwards from the "palm-peaks of Paradise," telling of the holy Sabbath. The earth lies in all the freshness of early dawn; a tranquillity pervades the wide-spread universe:—

How still the morning of the hallowed day!  
Mute is the voice of rural labour, hushed  
The ploughboy's whistle, and the milkmaid's song:  
The scythe lies glittering in the dewy wreath  
Of tedded grass, mingling with fading flowers  
That yesternorn bloomed waving in the breeze.  
Sounds the most faint attract the ear—the hum  
Of early bee, the trickling of the dew,  
The distant bleating midway up the hill.  
Calmness seems throned on yon unmoving cloud.  
To him who wanders o'er the upland leas,  
The blackbird's note comes mellow from the dale;  
And sweeter from the sky the gladsome lark  
Warbles his heaven-tuned song; the lulling brook  
Murmurs more gently down the deep-sunk glen;  
While from yon lowly roof, whose curling smoke  
O'ermounts the mist, is heard at intervals  
The voice of psalms, the simple song of praise.

It is sweet to stand on some hill-top, and listen to the now swelling and now fading chimes, to see the simple villagers pour into the old grey church, through its ivied porch, while the sun ascends the sky in glory; the corn-field waves in the breeze; the rooks caw in yonder wood; the bee and butterfly settle on the wild

flowers of the straggling lane. At such an hour, and at such a place, the music of the bells is doubly beautiful; heaven-like their harmony, exhilarating their minstrelsy. They now arise in fairy tones, now softly die away; the melting and spirit-soothing cadence seems to proclaim the tidings of hallowed peace and hallowed joy; their silver tinklings invest creation with deeper and lovelier colours: it is then that we feel the worthlessness of all our pantings after greatness; we behold the hollowness of earthly vanities; we are united with a firmer and a fonder tie to the Eternal; but we stroll downwards to the hamlet's church, and enter the sacred fane:—

A placid stillness reigns,  
 Until the man of God, worthy the name,  
 Opens the book, and reverentially  
 The stated portion reads. A pause ensues.  
 The organ breathes its distant thunder-notes,  
 Then swells into a diapason full:  
 The people, rising, sing; with harp, with harp,  
 And voice of psalms, harmoniously attuned,  
 The various voices blend; the long-drawn aisles,  
 At every close, the lingering strain prolong.  
 And now the tubes a softened stop controls;  
 In softer harmony the people join,  
 While liquid whispers from yon orphan-band  
 Recal the soul from adoration's trance,  
 And fill the eye with pity's gentle tears.  
 Again the organ-peal, loud, rolling, meets  
 The hallelujahs of the choir. Sublime  
 A thousand notes symphoniously ascend,  
 As if the whole were one, suspended high  
 In air, soaring heavenward.

The gentle wind bears onwards the deep-toned  
 music to the sick man's ears:—

Raised on his arm, he lists the cadence close,  
 Yet thinks he hears it still: his heart is cheered;  
 He smiles on death; but, ah! a wish will rise—  
 Would I were now beneath that echoing roof!  
 No lukewarm accents from my lips should flow;  
 My heart would sing; and many a Sabbath-day

My steps should thither turn ; or, wandering far  
 In solitary paths, where wild-flowers blow,  
 There would I bless His name who led me forth  
 From death's dark vale, to walk amid those sweets—  
 Who gives the bloom of health once more to glow  
 Upon this cheek, and lights this languid eye.

How natural is this scene; it takes hold of the heart: it is truth; we feel it to be so; every chord of the mind vibrates to its verity: it is poetry; it is reality. The sick-room opens to view: we see the pale inhabitant; he is raised on one arm; "again the harmony comes o'er the vale;" his ear catches the distant hymn; his eye is heavenwards; his spirit throbs with joy; the wish arises for health and strength; he promises to be holy, should his life be spared. Live, and be as thou hast vowed!

One other quotation from "The Sabbath," and we proceed to speak of Grahame's minor poems:—

Oh, Scotland ! much I love thy tranquil dales ;  
 But most on Sabbath eve, when low the sun  
 Slants through the upland copse, 'tis my delight,  
 Wandering and stopping oft, to hear the song  
 Of kindred praise arise from humble roofs ;  
 Or when the simple service ends, to hear  
 The lifted latch, and mark the grey-haired man,  
 The father and the priest, walk forth alone  
 Into his garden-plot, or little field,  
 To commune with his God in secret prayer—  
 To bless the Lord, that, in his downward years,  
 His children are about him : sweet meantime,  
 The thrush that sings upon the aged thorn,  
 Brings to his view the days of youthful years,  
 When that same aged thorn was but a bush.  
 Nor is the contrast between youth and age  
 To him a painful thought ; he joys to think  
 His journey near a close, heaven is his home.

It is sweet to visit the temple of the living God when twilight sheds her softening influence around, when the winds of night are rising, when the leaves

are falling to the ground, when the western sky is tinged with emerald and gold, when the chirping of the birds has ceased, when bee and butterfly are at rest, when those sounds "we love so well" swell ever and anon on the ear.

It is sweet to join in the simple responses of the rustic villagers, to listen to their homely praise, to hear their beloved minister. Other fanes may be more gorgeously decorated, and resound with all the magnificence of song, yet is there a gentler peace enjoyed in this lowlier and humbler pile. And around us sleep those who once delighted to worship here, who brought their children to be baptized, who were married at yonder altar, who learnt the road to heaven from the same pulpit, and who received the last and holiest consolations of earth from its pastor. We seem shut out from the world; it is but one family; all know each other; the concerns of each are the concerns of the whole; the success of one is the success of all; they are united by a deep and hallowed tie; the ground, the church, the spiritual shepherd are their own.

And yet sweeter is the season spent, after the services of the sanctuary, in the holy retreats of a happy home, when the family is gathered around the parents, and that most beautiful of all compositions, "Ken's Evening Hymn," is wafted to the courts above. To our mind there is nothing so well calculated to refine and expand the soul; the hour is softening beyond expression. The blazing fire, the healthy faces of the children, the complacent features of the long-affianced pair, the liquid notes of praise, the light thrown on the pictures, the warmth, and the comfort, and the snug security, the autumnal winds without, exert a powerful



influence; visions of purity and peace arise, "sweet as blue heavens o'er enchanted isles;" dreams of hallowed quietude. The heart is full of love; every wish, every thought, every throb is steeped in tenderness. "We are disposed to press to our bosom every flower and every distant star, every lofty spirit of our divining—an embracing of all nature, as of our beloved." There is a boundless range; we become, as it were, the soul of the universe; we seem the centre of all existence, the concentration of all life; there are awakenings to a higher state, and energies before unknown.

It was in such a still and quiet Sabbath evening that we first lisped the name of Jesus; in such a calm and tranquil season that we first learned to know the Son of Mary, the Son of God. We well remember the room, with its homely furniture and old-fashioned organ. There it is, just as it stood of yore; the fire flings our shadows on the wall; the light is that which we sometimes most love—the dim, melancholy hue of evening. We talk of the gentleness and meekness of the Christ; the tear rolls down the cheek as we think of his sorrows and his griefs; our little bosom feels deep, deep pangs; we would stand for him against the world; we cling around our fond mother; our heart gushes with tenderness towards her. The storm rages without; the wind whistles through the trees; the grey streaks of the setting sun reflect their sombre tinge on the floor; we crowd around the hearth. Ere long, and the door opens, and our revered parent enters; how soon the hours fly away! many have been the scenes of holy love witnessed there. The remembrance comes over us as some delicious dream of the better land.

Some few of Grahame's minor poems are productions

of exquisite beauty. What sweeter than this description of spring:—

Oh, how I love with melted soul to leave  
The house of prayer, and wander in the fields  
Alone! What though the opening spring be chill!  
What though the lark, checked in his airy path,  
Eke out his song, perched on the fallow clod,  
That still o'ertops the blade! What though no branch  
Have spread its foliage, save the willow wand,  
That dips its pale leaves in the swollen stream!  
What though the clouds oft lower! their threats but end  
In sunny showers, that scarcely fill the folds  
Of moss-couched violet, or interrupt  
The merle's dulcet pipe—melodious bird!  
He, hid behind the milk-white sloe-thorn spray,  
Whose early flowers anticipate the leaf,  
Welcomes the time of buds—the infant year.

After weeks and months of snow and storm, after the bleak, bare aspect of the beautiful creation, after howling and whistling of winds, after leafless trees and ice-bound brooks, with what throbbing emotions the heart hails the dawn of spring. Nature appears once more clothed in her pristine loveliness: the light transparent leaves, the budding of flowers, the peeping of the primrose in some shady lane, the fresh rippling of the waters, the serene blue skies, the cooling showers move strangely the soul. Every breeze resounds with the voice of bird; the hill-tops are golden in the sunshine; the valleys are lighted up with the radiant beams; the sun peers above the horizon earlier—it sets later; the genial rain descends; the rainbow spans the heavens; the earth is adorned with a greener tint; there is a sound of revelry on the gale; the soft and melting summer is on the wing; the world blossoms every hour.

Speaking of the stillness of a summer's noon, our poet beautifully says:—

Delightful is this loneliness; it calms  
My heart: pleasant the cool beneath these elms  
That throw across the stream a moveless shade:  
Here Nature, in her midnoon whisper speaks;  
How peaceful every sound.

What an exquisite sketch we have in these few lines!—the picture is complete: the shadows of the trees are on the waters; the sun is up the heaven; every sound is hushed; the sky is one vast arch of blue; the earth is one gem of purest green; there is no hum of bee—no song of bird; the luxury of eastern meditation steals over the soul; existence seems to float in an enchanting softness; we feel as if we were in a new world; the tumult of man is forgotten; a serene quietude pervades every object; the leaves move not; the wind is dropped; the imagination revels in fair and lovely creations of poet and of sculptor; the mind is fascinated; it is absorbed; it has, as it were, ceased to breathe; there is a dreamlike beauty; the flowers stir not; there is no ripple in the brook; the stream flows onwards, but it flows imperceptibly.

The summer fades; its gorgeousness and its magnificence are gone; the crown of autumn is dim and shadowy; a grandeur sits on her brow; our feelings are touched with a solemn awe; our pulse beats slower; our visions are of eternity; our thoughts of the infinite existence; the sweet scent of flowers comes no more upon the breeze; the honeysuckle, and the rose, and the violet are in the dust; the foliage of dark forests has perished; Death nips the fair face of creation. "A sad autumn-mist settles like a pall over the exhausted fields;" Earth becomes one "immeasurable gravestone." The black clouds roll over the sky; they come sooner, they tarry later; the winds moan and moan, as if the world was

dying; the leafless oak bends; the sun sets in sullen and gloomy splendour; solitude hastens on every moment; the golden waving corn is gathered in; the harvest-home has been celebrated:—

The ruddy haws  
Now clothe the half-leaved thorn; the bramble bends  
Beneath its jetty load; the hazel hangs,  
With auburn branches, dipping in the stream,  
That sweeps along, and threatens to o'erflow  
The leaf-strewn banks.

“There is an eventide,” says the chaste and elegant Alison, “in the day—an hour when the sun retires and the shadows fall, and when nature assumes the appearances of soberness and silence; it is an hour from which everywhere the thoughtless fly, as peopled only in their imagination with images of gloom; it is an hour, on the other hand, which in every age the wise have loved, as bringing with it sentiments and affections more valuable than all the splendours of the day. Its first impression is to still all the turbulence of thought or passion which the day may have brought forth. We follow with our eye the descending sun; we listen to the decaying sounds of labour and of toil; and when all the fields are silent around us, we feel a kindred stillness to breathe upon our souls, and to calm them from the agitations of society. From the first impression there is a second which naturally follows: in the day we are living with men, in the eventide we begin to live with nature; we see the world withdrawn from us, the shades of night darken over the habitations of men, and we feel ourselves alone. It is an hour fitted, as it would seem, by Him who made us, to still, but with gentle hand, the throb of every unruly passion, and the ardour of every impure

desire, and, while it veils for a time the world that misleads us, to awaken in our hearts those legitimate affections which the heat of the day may have dissolved. There is yet a further scene it presents us with. While the world withdraws from us, and while the shades of the evening darken upon our dwellings, the splendours of the firmament come forward to our view. In the moments when earth is overshadowed, heaven opens to our eyes the radiance of a sublimer being; our hearts follow the successive splendours of the scene; and while we forget for a time the obscurity of earthly concerns, we feel that there are yet greater things than these. There is, in the second place, an eventide in the year—a season, as we now witness, when the sun withdraws his propitious light—when the winds arise and the leaves fall, and nature around us seems to sink into decay. It is said, in general, to be the season of melancholy; and if by this word be meant that it is the time of solemn and serious thought, it is undoubtedly the season of melancholy; yet it is a melancholy so soothing, so gentle in its approach, and so prophetic in its influence, that they who have known it feel, as instinctively, that it is the doing of God, and that the heart of man is not thus finely touched but to fine issues. When we go out into the fields in the evening of the year, a different voice approaches us; we regard, even in spite of ourselves, the still but steady advances of time. A few days ago, and the summer of the year was grateful, and every element was filled with life, and the sun of heaven seemed to glory in his ascendant. He is now enfeebled in his power; the desert no more blossoms like the rose; the song of joy is no more heard among the branches; and

the earth is strewed with that foliage which once bespoke the magnificence of summer. Whatever may be the passions which society has awakened, we pause amid this apparent desolation of nature; we sit down in the lodge of the way-faring man in the wilderness, and we feel that all we witness is the emblem of our own fate; such, also, in a few years, will be our own condition; the blossoms of our spring, the pride of our summer, will also fade into decay; and the pulse that now beats high with virtuous or with vicious desire, will gradually sink, and then must stop for ever. We rise from our meditations with hearts softened and subdued, and we return into life as into a shady scene, where we have 'disquieted ourselves in vain;' yet a few years, we think, and all that now bless, or all that now convulse humanity, will also have perished; the mightiest pageantry of life will pass—the loudest notes of triumph or of conquest will be silent in the grave; the wicked, wherever active, 'will cease from troubling,' and the weary, wherever suffering, 'will be at rest.' Under an impression so profound, we feel our own hearts better; the cares, the animosities, the hatreds which society may have engendered, sink unperceived from our bosoms. In the general desolation of nature, we feel the littleness of our own passions—we look forward to that kindred evening which time must bring to all; we anticipate the graves of those we hate as of those we love; every unkind passion falls with the leaves that fall around us; and we return slowly to our homes, and to the society which surrounds us, with the wish only to enlighten or to bless them. If there were no other effects of such appearances of nature upon our minds, they would still be valuable—they would

## S. T. COLERIDGE.

"We may give to our characters the lovely sensibility and lofty thoughts which only exist in a few, and we may show the forms of humanity free from its blemishes and alloys; we may look on female beauty, and imagine that there dwells in it an angelic spirit;—these are within the province of the truly inspired bards. But such notes are not reached except by the highly favoured of heaven. Thousands have felt the dim visions within, but have not been able to embody them: they have gone to their graves dissatisfied with themselves and unknown to the world."

SIR EGERTON BRIDGES.

COLERIDGE—the dreamer, as many term him—was one of the most remarkable of men. It is his very dreaminess that we love: many are the beautiful, wild, and sublime combinations that we have in gentle slumberings. Indeed, some of our loveliest pictures have been presented in dreams: there has been a richer colouring, and a softer tint, and a browner shade, and a more unruffled calm, and a more hallowed quietude, and more magnificent bursts of melody, and fresher breezes, and more silvery tones, and more delicious scents, and a fairer moon, and a more resplendent sun, and more spiritual beauty breathing from the stars, and deeper music in the hum of bee and song of bird, and a darker forest foliage, and a more soothing twilight, and more enchanting day-

breaks, and looks more piercing, and glances more tender, and vows more fervent, and aspirations higher, and loftier, and more majestic.

Keats, too, was a dreamer—he could “dream deliciously.” He may be wanting in masculine energy, and tremendous power; but he fully makes up for this in sweetness of thought and diction; he melts his readers; his lines are luscious; he is the very spirit of love; his “*Endymion*” is full of all charming things; it is the dream of a soul redolent of earth’s freshness, and earth’s glory. He is one of the most luxurious of writers; his verses tremble with sweetness; they are flower-scented and flower-tinted; there is the odour of the rose, and violet, and pink; their richness cloys; the soft blue sky, and the light green meadows, and the silver voice of the lark, and the gentle music of the trees, and the melody of streams, and the black tresses of woman, and woman’s tenderness and devotedness, and the unutterable bliss of pure attachment, and the eternal language of imperishable faith, are visioned in his poetry: they become vital; they live. It is like some old garden, where every shape and form of beauty suns itself beneath the summer heaven, but which has been neglected and forgotten. There is a wild luxuriance, a straggling and endless wealth; his words seem dipped in honey; he revels in the calm serenity of creation; you hear the murmuring of the rippling waters, and the deep, low sounds of the wild woods.

He was nature itself—as divine, as rich, as delicious; he seemed to float on softest clouds; he was the incense of flowers; everything he said was music; he weltered in sweets; he talked of beauty; and there were silver



sounds. No man, before nor after, imaged the universe more truly: the fair and blushing charms of heaven and earth glow in all his paintings, and he was sublime; his "Hyperion" is a magnificent and massive fragment. The boy had a gigantic soul; it was endowed with grandeur and tremendous power.

It is true, he has written much nonsense; but it is sweet nonsense. Other men's is harsh and grating; but this is as a lively strain of music; it took the hue and colouring of his own star-lit fancy; he bathed in the blue empyrean, and afterwards slept and dreamt on a bed of amaranths. How exquisite his opening line in "Endymion:" "A thing of beauty is a joy for ever!" It is dropping with nectar: the sweet, soft streams meandering through flowery meadows; "trees, young and old, sprouting a shady boon for simple sheep;" golden clouds, the serene blue of heaven; the chiming brook; the slant beam of the sun lighting up some dark copse; the murmur of gnats in the calm eventide of summer; the chirping of birds in the low dell; the kindling dawn; the new fresh spring; "the mid-forest brake, rich with a sprinkling of fair musk-rose blooms;" the purple butterfly; the orange-blossom; the silver ray glancing through the green leaves, as they tremble in the breeze; the sound of the village bell; the perfumes of the honey-suckle; "the shells on the sea-sand;" the low cottage, with the vine climbing its windows; the steeple of some old church; the child playing with its companion; the infant reposing on the fond bosom of its mother; the first prayer; the domestic hymn, are all things of beauty, and are joys for ever!

Coleridge is master of imperishable thought; many

of his strains cannot die away; they breathe the music of immortality: his verse is inspired with all the divinity of poetry; it is steeped in the essence of eternity; its mighty influences sweep over the spirit as everlasting symphonies from an angel's harp. There is both a subtle beauty and a stirring grandeur about them: they kindle the enthusiasm of the soul; they move the keenest sensibilities of the heart. He writes with an energy which exalts, a sweetness which melts: at times, he stands on the mountain's brow, and the storm is the music he loves; but at other seasons, he reclines on some mossy bank, beneath the clear silver moonlight, and the soft breeze is the melody he chooses. "The Ancient Mariner" is a tale of supernatural beauty: we are entranced while perusing it; we become isolated; we are bound by some wild, deep spell; it is a strain of another existence; there are unearthly witcheries about it; it is sweeter than the murmur of a dream; it is the production of a brilliant imagination in some eventide when its brightness became, as it were, a soft, golden light. Madame de Stael says: "It is a great art in certain fictions to imitate by words the solemn stillness which imagination pictures in the empire of darkness and death;" and Coleridge has succeeded in this to admiration.

"Christabel" belongs to the same class; illustrates our poet's theory of an intimate connexion between this and the unseen world; its imagery is as singular, and perhaps more so, whilst its versification is as strangely modulated. It is unfinished, and we are glad that it is so: another note might have jarred its exquisite music, another word might have rolled a cloud over its enchanting beauty; another line might

have been as some dark storm, dispelling its thousand sweets. As it stands, we love it; it is a fragment of something wondrous; it is a fragment of something mysterious: it reminds us of some soft hymn heard for a moment in fancy, when the moon is up, across a narrow stream: another minute, and the delicious delusion is gone. Just so with this poem; its strain is as silvery and as momentary; there is a wildness and a dimness. We ask questions who and what; but no answer can we get; all is enveloped in strangeness and loneliness: we try to break the spell, but cannot; we endeavour to free ourselves from the sorcery, but are unable; we are fascinated almost to pain; the very language is something marvellous.

His Odes are finely written, and display profound thought and sublime imagination. Those on "France" and "To the Departing Year" are magnificent. Coleridge is much a kindred spirit with Beethoven; they both arise above the earth into a wider and more ethereal atmosphere; they breathe immortal air; their music is of the infinite heaven: both pensive and soothing at seasons, they both alike swell with enthusiasm, and pour out such bursts of glorious, oceanic minstrelsy as seem to bear one into a sea of all majestic sounds. Mass on mass follows; sweep on sweep. Ere we recover ourselves from the first ponderous notes, we are thrilled by others of deeper power: the rolling of the thunders, and the singing of the ever-tumultuous waters are heard ever and anon. It is peal succeeding peal, clap on clap; it is crash following crash; dashing waves ever breaking on the shore, or against some huge rock; the very elements mingle in a chaotic confusion, clashings, jarrings, tremendous sounds, and yet all is

the divinest harmony. There is sunshine, and flowers. and waving tree, and hum of bees, and silvery tones of eventide, and exquisite melodies of love. They string their lyres to the lofty symphonies of the angelic choir; they make sky and earth one everlasting chord; with their sublime outbreaks the soul is, as it were, torn from its socket. Listen:—

Hast thou a charm to stay the morning-star  
In his steep course? So long he seems to pause  
On thy bald, awful head, O sovran Blanc!  
The Arve and Arveiron at thy base  
Rave ceaselessly; but thou, most awful form!  
Risest from forth the silent sea of pines,  
How silently! Around thee and above  
Deep is the air and dark, substantial, black;  
An ebon mass: methinks thou piercest it,  
As with a wedge! But when I look again,  
It is thine own calm home, thy crystal shrine,  
Thy habitation from eternity!  
O dread and silent mount! I gazed upon thee,  
Till thou, still present to the bodily sense,  
Didst vanish from my thought: entranced in prayer,  
I worshipped the Invisible alone.

Yet, like some sweet beguiling melody,  
So sweet, we know not we are listening to it,  
Thou, the meanwhile, wast blending with my thought,  
Yea, with my life and life's own secret joy:  
Till the dilating soul, enrapt, transfused  
Into the mighty vision passing—then,  
As in her natural form, swelled vast to heaven!

Awake, my soul! not only passive praise  
Thou owest! not alone these swelling tears,  
Mute thanks and secret ecstasy! Awake,  
Voice of sweet song! Awake, my heart, awake!  
Green vales and icy cliffs, all join my hymn!  
Thou first and chief, sole sovereign of the vale!  
O struggling with the darkness all the night,  
And visited all night by troops of stars,  
Or when they climb the sky, or when they sink:  
Companion of the morning-star at dawn,  
Thyself earth's rosy star, and of the dawn  
Co-herald: wake, O wake, and utter praise!  
Who sank thy sunless pillars deep in earth?

And you, ye five wild torrents fiercely glad !  
Who called you forth from night and utter death,  
From dark and icy caverns called you forth,  
Down those precipitous, black, jagged rocks,  
For ever shattered, and the same for ever ?  
Who gave you your invulnerable life,  
Your strength, your speed, your fury, and your joy,  
Unceasing thunder and eternal foam ?  
And who commanded—and the silence came,—  
Here let the billows stiffen, and have rest ?

Ye ice-falls ! ye that from the mountain's brow  
Adown enormous ravines slope amain—  
Torrents, methinks, that heard a mighty voice,  
And stopped at once, amid their maddest plunge !  
Motionless torrents ! Silent cataracts !  
Who made you glorious as the gates of heaven,  
Beneath the keen, full moon ? Who bade the sun  
Clothe you with rainbows ? Who, with living flowers  
Of loveliest blue, spread garlands at your feet ?  
God ! let the torrents, like a shout of nations,  
Answer ! and let the ice-plains echo, God !  
God ! sing, ye meadow-streams, with gladsome voice ;  
Ye pine-groves, with your soft and soul-like sounds ;  
And they, too, have a voice, yon piles of snow,  
And in their perilous fall shall thunder, God !

Ye living flowers that skirt th' eternal frost,  
Ye wild goats sporting round the eagle's nest,  
Ye eagles, playmates of the mountain-storm,  
Ye lightnings, the dread arrows of the clouds,  
Ye signs and wonders of the element,  
Utter forth God, and fill the hills with praise.

Thou, too, hoar mount, with thy sky-pointing peaks,  
Oft from whose feet the avalanche, unheard,  
Shoots downward, glittering through the pure serene  
Into the depth of clouds that veil thy breast :  
Thou, too, again, stupendous mountain ; thou  
That, as I raise my head, awhile bowed low  
In adoration, upward from thy base ;  
Slow travelling, with dim eyes suffused with tears,  
Solemnly seemest, like a vapoury cloud,  
To rise before me,—rise, O ever rise,  
Rise like a cloud of incense from the earth :  
Thou, kingly spirit, throned among the hills,  
Thou dread Ambassador from earth to heaven,  
Great Hierarch, tell thou the silent sky,  
And tell the stars, and tell yon rising sun,  
Earth, with her thousand voices, praises God.

Our poet's translation of "Wallenstein" is executed in a masterly and brilliant manner; he has entered so fully into the spirit of its author, that it loses nothing in its English dress. His "Zapoyla"—imitated from Shakspeare's *Winter's Tale*—and his "Remorse," a tragedy, exhibit all the beauties and all the faults of his style. They are more suited for the closet than the stage; thought enhances their value, and opens up many unperceived graces: they are, however, deficient in energy and passion; but as works of genius, they, perhaps, have not been excelled in modern times.

Coleridge's poetry is a combination of the subtle witcheries of a calm, unruffled summer's eve, and the awe-inspiring grandeur of an autumnal sunset in some mountainous district. Thou hast seen, O reader, when sauntering along the straggling pathway of some lone wood, the day growing dim and dimmer; and thou hast heard the song of thrush in yon tall trees, and the leap of squirrel, and the murmuring of gnats, and the rustling of the leaves, and the stir of branches, and the lowing of the kine, and the silver music of the chapel-bell, and the gentle purling of the rill, and the distant hum of the great city; and thou hast felt a soothing influence steal over thy being as of elysian rest: and as the twilight has become more vague and indistinct, and the shadows more solemnly beautiful, thou hast felt that quietude becoming sweet and sweeter until it has borne thee far off among sunny glances and angel countenances, and soft, balmy tendernesses, and fond endearments, and liquid hymnings, and holiest breathings, and hallowed melodies, and flowers, and stars, and all the heaven of divinest things. Or, perchance, thou hast stood on ocean's sands, where they stretch away oppo-

site the Ailsa Craig, and as the waves have beaten loud and louder on the shore, and thrown their snow-white foam aloft beneath the stirring wind, thou hast marked the deep, dark crimson colouring of the western sky, tinting the summit of Goat-fell with clouds of blood, and ever and anon casting over the wide hemisphere, and the boundless roll of waters, and the distant ship, and the far-off rock, and the screaming sea-gull, and the rising moon, and the pale vesper, its own hues of tremendous grandeur and dread magnificence: in these two, in the enchanting loveliness of the woodland scene, and in the ponderous glory of the heaving main, we have the characteristics of our poet's song.

His love poems are exquisitely beautiful, uniting with a confiding tenderness and sweet simplicity a captivating melancholy. He has enshrined the passion in a radiance lovelier than the silver crescent: his "Genevieve" is inimitable: it is as enchanting as the sculptured Venus, or as Handel's delicious air, "Waft her, angels, to the skies:" it is chaste, elegant, melodious; it is the most delightful sketch of first-love we ever gazed upon; it has all its fine, delicate colouring; it is more thrilling than starlight.

The calm eventide, the soft moonlight, the ruined tower, the statue of the armed knight, the minstrel and the harp, the romantic tale, the meek and gentle maiden, the blush of affection, the hopes and fears, the confiding artlessness and trusting love, all combine to form a picture of consummate beauty and consummate truth. And the poet's language is so exquisite—so like the music tones of heaven. But hearken:—

All thoughts, all passions, all delights,  
Whatever stirs this mortal frame,

Are all but ministers of love,  
And feed his sacred flame.

Oft in my waking dreams do I  
Live o'er again that happy hour,  
When midway on the mount I lay,  
Beside the ruined tower.

The moonshine, stealing o'er the scene,  
Had blended with the lights of eve :  
And she was there, my hope, my joy,  
My own dear Genevieve.

She leaned against the armed man,  
The statue of the armed knight ;  
She stood and listened to my lay,  
Amid the lingering light.

Few sorrows hath she of her own,  
My hope, my joy, my Genevieve !  
She loves me best whene'er I sing  
The songs that make her grieve.

I played a soft and doleful air,  
I sang an old and moving story—  
An old rude song that suited well  
That ruin wild and hoary.

She listened with a flitting blush,  
With downcast eyes and modest grace ;  
For well she knew I could not choose  
But gaze upon her face.

I told her of the knight that wore  
Upon his shield a burning brand ;  
And that for ten long years he wooed  
The lady of the land.

I told her how he pined ; and ha !  
The deep, the low, the pleading tone  
With which I sang another's love,  
Interpreted my own.

She listened with a flitting blush,  
With downcast eyes and modest grace ;  
And she forgave me that I gazed  
Too fondly on her face.

But when I told the cruel scorn  
Which crazed this bold and lovely knight,  
And that he crossed the mountain-woods,  
Nor rested day nor night ;



But sometimes from the savage den,  
And sometimes from the darksome shade,  
And sometimes starting up at once,  
In green and sunny glade,

There came and looked him in the face  
An angel beautiful and bright ;  
And that he knew it was a fiend,  
This miserable knight !

And that, unknowing what he did,  
He leaped amid a murderous band,  
And saved from outrage worse than death  
The lady of the land ;

And how she wept and clasped his knees,  
And how she tended him in vain—  
And ever strove to expiate  
The scorn that crazed his brain.

And that she nursed him in a cave ;  
And how his madness went away,  
When on the yellow forest leaves  
A dying man he lay ;

His dying words—but when I reached  
That tenderest strain of all the ditty,  
My faltering voice and pausing harp  
Disturbed her soul to pity !

All impulses of soul and sense  
Had thrilled my guileless Genevieve—  
The music, and the doleful tale,  
The rich and balmy eve ;

And hopes and fears, that kindled hope,  
An undistinguishable throng ;  
And gentle wishes long subdued,  
Subdued and cherished long !

She wept with pity and delight,  
She blushed with love and virgin shame ;  
And like the murmur of a dream  
I heard her breathe my name.

Her bosom heaved, she stepped aside ;  
As conscious of my look she stepped—  
Then suddenly, with timorous eye,  
She fled to me and wept.

She half-enclosed me with her arms,  
She pressed me with a meek embrace,  
And bending back her head, looked up  
And gazed upon my face.

'Twas partly love, and partly fear,  
And partly 'twas a bashful art,  
That I might rather feel than see  
The swelling of her heart.

I calmed her fears; and she was calm,  
And told her love with virgin pride;  
And so I won my Genevieve,  
My bright and beauteous bride!

## T. K. HERVEY.

"Yet not into itself alone, or even within the circumscribed horizon of the present, does the mind retire from eternity; it takes refuge in past time, and recalls, with fondness and entrancement—unknown while they were in his power,—the sports of infancy, the raptures of boyhood, and the passionate pursuits of youth. But in the dream of memory, he forgets that while he was passing successively through these, the poetry of Hope was in each alluring him forward to the stage beyond; and even through the matter-of-fact period of maturity, continued to decoy him from the every-day business of life, till he arrived at that barrier where "desire faileth, because man goeth to his long home." It is from that barrier that he daily looks less and less onward, and more and more behind him, at the scenes which he is leaving for ever, and especially at the earliest, the most endeared, though the most familiar of the whole series. Ah! then, how naturally will some bright day, among the many clouded ones, recur to him in all its splendour, and be spent, like youth renewed,—spent over again in imagination, through all its hours, with an intensity of enjoyment which the reality never gave—never could give, subject, as all present felicities must be, to inconveniences and annoyances, forgotten as soon as they are over; while the ethereal, or rather the ideal, of the scenes and the circumstances alone survives in remembrance."

JAMES MONTGOMERY.

THIS author has published but little poetry, but that little is marked by much grace and beauty—a melancholy grace—a melancholy beauty: he seems to hold the same views of human life so common to young poets after their first fond and brilliant and rainbow hopes are dashed to the ground: he deems the past sweeter than the present; he talks of the sunny joys<sup>d</sup>, and the sad realities of manhood. Friends

that promised truth, have forsaken him—become cool—sleep in the silent tomb. The eye that once gazed with all the tenderness of parental love is dimmed, and the knee on which he sat, and the bosom on which he leaned, are quiet in the grave. Cares and anxieties cloud the present; disappointments and shattered anticipations give fear to the future.

Seest thou, O reader! yonder bee on those sweet-scented and rose-tintured flowers, golden with the morning sun? It is the emblem of childhood.

We own that there is something peculiarly pleasing in retrospection, in recalling the face of friend and kin, in turning over the letters which threw sunlight on many a day, in breathing again the vital air of infancy and youth, in witnessing those scenes where we so often gambolled, in remembering our infant prayers, our mother's fondness, our father's tenderness, our little hymns, our playmates, our delicious hopes. But our maturer judgment tells us that they were not our happiest days. We had sorrow and trouble then; we had as much as we could bear. Our romantic schemes may have failed; our ardent expectations may have been disappointed; friends may have departed to "the land where all things are forgotten," and men may have treated us with unkindness and cruelty; but even these have not been able to blight the hallowed bliss of the present hour.

Childhood! when we lisped fondly a mother's name, and when we gazed earnestly into her fair and beautiful countenance—childhood! when our young heart bubbled up to every new delight, and when it danced to the soft prattle of our own lips—childhood! when we clung around the neck of those we loved, and told them

all our griefs and all our joys, and when we knelt in simplicity and artlessness beside the hearth at morning and at evening, and offered up our infant prayers—childhood! when the heroic deed, and the noble action, and the hardy achievement blushed our cheek with rapture and high resolve, and when the summer brought the visits of kinsmen who gladdened our home with their gentle faces—childhood! when we gave all our heart to sympathise with the distressed, and cheerfully parted with our little wealth to feed the sons of want, and when our own bosom gushed with affection at every kindness and every service—childhood! when the thought was written on the brow, when we broke from all restraint, and wandered down some wild lane to see how the violet and the primrose grew, and when the singing of birds, and the hum of bees, and the waving grass thrilled us with ecstasy—childhood! when we gazed on the beautiful rainbow, and the beautiful heavens, and fancied them not far from earth, and looking onwards through some opening wood, imagined that we should soon reach them; and when the silvery moon shone in at our window pane, and appeared as some radiant lamp to light creation with; and when the million stars rolled over the immense expanse, breathing divinest music—childhood! when we dreamt of cloudless skies and fadeless flowers, and fondest friends, and hallowed retreats, and eternal truth, and everlasting love, and imperishable, inextinguishable bliss.

But childhood, with all its felicity, and dreaming loveliness, and charming sweets, was but a prelude to more delicious joy. Thought awoke, and dawned; truth beamed brightly in the horizon; nature became clothed with deeper associations; the stars became more than

stars, and the flower more than flower; they were the language of the Divinity; their intonations, how beautiful and majestic!—it was angelic music—silence and yet melody: no sounds issued from those twinkling points, and yet came sublimest strains. We gazed upon the clear heavens one evening; all was still, and yet there swelled forth such a mighty gush of song as enthralled the immortal within: with dawn came the voice of peace; nature in all its forms and changes—the wild sweep of autumnal winds, the magnificent sunset, the rushing of the storm—winter, with its leafless trees, and falling snow, and driving sleet—spring, with its primrose starting up from some mossy bank, and refreshing breezes, and bracing air, and cooling showers—summer, with its luxuriant foliage and cloudless skies, and noon-tide heats, and balmy evenings, and revelry of delights, were to us full of the softest and most harmonious cadences: there were liquid voices everywhere; they pervaded all existence. These broke in upon us, and imperishable affection and everlasting faith and indissoluble union. We felt that we were in a world of beauty; we knew that it was ours, its wealth, and treasures, and resources, and creations were our own. They interpreted Jehovah's parental care and parental regard. Thought became linked with each sparkling orb, and with each petal of the modest flower.

Well might we be happy; and we were happy! We knelt in this vast temple, and prayed to become like the meek and lowly Jesus; we prayed for holiness: peace ever hovers over the bended knee, and bended heart; it hovered over us.

Nature then was beautiful; it is more beautiful now: the brook, as it purled through some leafy wood, was

sweet then; it is sweeter now. Associations of the past, and hallowed memories, and deep thoughts cling around every object. The sun, as it sunk so gorgeously behind the hills, was magnificent then; it is more magnificent now: the ocean, with its billowy waves, was sublime then; it is sublimer now. With the growth of moral and intellectual being, the visible creation has become invested with a fairer loveliness and a deeper glory. The universe, with its myriad stars, and rolling, surging waters, and fine out-stretched landscapes, and lofty mountains, has become a symbol of something higher, and mightier, and more ethereal.

Manhood! when we call up the past, and wander amidst its sweetnesses; when we live in years that have gone, and remember all those who smiled on our infancy, and spread beauty over the path of youth; when looking on creation, every little flower, and every little shrub reminds us of friends and kinsmen; when every breeze awakens some delicious memory, and every sound of music recalls some hallowed scene; and when the earth, and sky, and stars breathe out a more spiritual melody, and the universe glows with a softer and more silvery brightness—manhood! when we hold deep converse with the “mighty dead,” with Milton, and Dante, and Shakspeare; when, with the immortals, we speak of the true and good, and whilst we question them of things everlasting and things gigantic, our language wears a more solemn meaning—manhood! when we toil for the beings of our love, and when sitting around our own hearth, we listen to the prattle of our little ones—manhood! when we bend the knee at the domestic altar, and commit our every treasure into the keeping of the Holiest; when we watch over the de-

clining years of our parents, and administer to their every comfort, and when with all the chaste happiness and gentle bliss of home, and all the unutterable blessings of sanctified love, and all the pure and inexpressible charms of our own Paradise, we cast upon their walk heavenward somewhat of the radiant brightness of the better world. Is not manhood sweet? It may have trials, and bitter and severe ones too, but how divine and exquisite are its joys!

Manhood! when in the gushing fulness of our hearts we throw the golden glimpse of coming blessedness into a sorrowing and distressed home, and when, sacrificing our little comforts, we help, with the great and good, to evangelize the world — manhood! when we behold in the loveliness of our wives and children, and in their constancy and holy faith, a symbol of the Universal Beauty; and when, from the lisping of our babes, their artlessness, their simplicity, we learn to lean on the bosom of the universal Father; and when in the inviolate sanctity of the marriage vow we behold some divine shadowings of the oneness of Christ and his church—manhood! when darkest trials are turned to richest blessings, and the cup of grief becomes sweeter than the nectar of Eden; when we commune with the Eternal, face to face; when we struggle with sin, and pant after unsullied purity and love; when the consolations of the Spirit breathe their unruffled quietude into the soul; when the peace so soothing and so profound hovers over the heart; when the Everlasting makes himself known, when the “blood of sprinkling” washes us from every stain, and when the infinitude of the parental affection breaks in upon the tranced sight—manhood! when we put on strength and know-



ledge, and gazing on the coming years, prepare ourselves for triumphing over difficulty; when we cast forward our thoughts to the invisible world, and people it with pure intelligences, and when looking upward on each twinkling star, we feel that it is the abode of everlasting rest and everlasting beauty, and when the mellowed light of declining day steals down upon the summer flowers, and reminds us of that better land, and when the delicious blue of the evening sky emblems its calm and serene repose, and the primrose and violet and cowslip in the fresh green meadows speak of a purer existence—manhood! when we clothe ourselves with the perfections of Jesus, and when, casting away all our sins, we cling and cleave to the one God, and for ever recline on his all-pervading tendernesses and love. Oh, is not manhood fraught with happiness and joy!

But we turn back to childhood and our poet. How exquisite is this:—

Dry up thy tears, love!—I fain would be gay!  
Sing me the song of my early day!  
Give me the music, so witchingly wild,  
That solaced my sorrows when I was a child!—  
Years have gone by me, both lonely and long,  
Since my spirit was soothed by thy voice in that song!

Years have gone by!—and life's lowlands are past,  
And I stand on the hill which I sighed for, at last;  
But I turn from the summit that once was my star,  
To the vale of my childhood, seen dimly and far;—  
Each blight on its beauty seems softened and gone,  
Like a land that we love, in the light of the morn!

There are the flowers that have withered away,  
And the hopes that have faded, like fairies at play;  
And the eyes that are dimmed, and the smiles that are gone,  
And thou, too, art there!—but thou still art mine own;  
Fair as in childhood, and fond as in youth,  
Thou, only thou, wert a spirit of truth!

Time hath been o'er thee, and darkened thine eye,  
And thoughts are within thee more holy and high;  
Sadder thy smile than in days that are o'er,

And lovelier all that was lovely before ;  
 That which thou wert is not that which thou art,  
 Thou, too, art altered in all—but in heart !

Lie on my bosom, and lead me along  
 Over lost scenes, by the magic of song !  
 What if I weep at the vision of years ?  
 Sighs are not sorrow—and joy has her tears !  
 Sad is my brow, as thy music is sad,  
 But oh ! it is long since my heart was so glad !

All that is left me of life's promise is here,—  
 Thou, my young idol, in sorrow more dear !  
 But thy murmurs remind me of many away,  
 And though I am glad, love ! I cannot be gay !—  
 All have departed that offered like truth,  
 Save thou—only thou—and the song of my youth !

There is much that is touching in this: the poet asks for the song of early days; he listens to its beautiful but now plaintive strain, the pleasures and joys of the past are recalled, his bright rainbow dreams and golden visions and unclouded hopes now breathe a sadness; they have faded, save one, but she the sweetest and the dearest; on his brow sits a pensive calmness, in her eye dwells a melancholy loveliness, her fair form reclines on his, thoughts and memories and remembrances cross over the soul with dirge-like music.

The sunny anticipations of youth still play around our poet, but he is all alone. The gentle melodies of bee and bird, and the rich tints of the butterfly, and the exquisite charms of earth are disregarded; they fascinate him not; they but yield a deeper sense of loneliness.

I am all alone!—and the visions that play  
 Round life's young days, have passed away;  
 And the songs are hushed that gladness sings,  
 And the hopes that I cherished have made them wings;  
 And the light of my heart is dimmed and gone,  
 As I sit in my sorrow—and all alone !

And the forms which I fondly loved are flown,  
 And friends have departed—one by one;

And memory sits, whole lonely hours,  
And weaves her wreath of hope's faded flowers,  
And weeps o'er the chaplet, when no one is near  
To gaze on her grief, or to chide her tear!  
And the hour of my childhood is distant far,  
And I walk in a land where strangers are;  
And the looks that I meet, and the sounds that I hear,  
Are not light to my spirit, nor song to my ear;  
And sunshine is round me—which I cannot see,  
And eyes which beam kindness—but not for me!  
And the song goes round, and the glowing smile,  
But I am desolate all the while!  
And faces are bright and bosoms glad,  
And nothing, I think, but my heart is sad!  
And I seem like a blight in a region of bloom,  
While I dwell in my own little circle of gloom!  
I wander about like a shadow of pain,  
With a worm in my breast, and a spell on my brain;  
And I list, with a start, to the gushing of gladness,—  
Oh! how it grates on a bosom all sadness!—  
So, I turn from a world where I never was known,  
To sit in my sorrow—and all alone.

There are few who have not felt the loneliness so beautifully described in these verses: there are times when such sadness comes to all, but to the sensitive spirit most. How often do we wander in the gloom of our own hearts! Around, and countenances may be lighted up with smiles, and the lips of beauty may warble the song of joy, and the eye of affection may beam with love, and the hand of generous daring may be ready to aid; and yet we fancy that of all this exhaustless tenderness and care there is none for us.

Our poet betakes himself to the grave of his sister, and there meditates and weeps: he thinks of the past, and wishes that he was once more a child upon his mother's knee; but he feels that such desires are futile; he sighs to find them so. The moon, the clear, silver moon, looks calmly down on the tomb, and on the solitary one: the stillness is in unison with his pensive

thoughts; the serene night is in accordance with his melancholy emotions; he seems removed far off from the turmoil and anxiety of existence:—

The feeling is a nameless one  
 With which I sit upon thy stone,  
 And read the tale I dare not breathe,  
 Of blighted hope that sleeps beneath!  
 A simple tablet bears above  
 Brief record of a father's love,  
 And hints, in language yet more brief,  
 The story of a father's grief:—  
 Lost spirit!—thine was not a breast  
 To struggle vainly after rest!  
 Thou wert not made to bear the strife,  
 Nor labour through the storms of life;  
 Thy heart was in too warm a mould  
 To mingle with the dull and cold,  
 And every thought that wronged thy truth  
 Fell like a blight upon thy youth!—  
 Thou shouldst have been, for thy distress,  
 Less pure—and oh, more passionless!  
 For sorrow's wasting mildew gave  
 Its tenant to my sister's grave!  
 But all thy griefs, my girl, are o'er!  
 Thy fair blue eyes shall weep no more!  
 'Tis sweet to know thy fragile form  
 Lies safe from every future storm!—  
 Oft, as I haunt the dreamy gloom  
 That gathers round thy peaceful tomb;  
 I love to see the lightning stream  
 Along thy stone with fitful gleam;  
 To fancy in each flash are given  
 Thy spirit's visitings from heaven;—  
 And smile to hear the tempest rave  
 Above my sister's quiet grave!

The farewell is no less sweet; it is addressed by a female to her lover upon his going into the world. There is something peculiarly interesting on such an occasion: it may be that the two have grown up from childhood together, that they have reaped the same delights, tasted the same joys, witnessed the same scenes, borne the same sorrows, loved the same persons,

attended the same school, sat on the same form, repeated the same tasks, conned over the same page, regarded with affection the same flowers, and looked on the same showers and sunshine, rambled along the same meadows, strolled down the same wild lanes, gazed on the same stars, worshipped in the same old grey church; and now, for the first time, they are to part, to break away from each other, to tear themselves from all that they love best on earth. Until now, they knew not, thought not of separation; that word, in its agony and bitterness, was sealed, and without meaning. But now the duties of life call, and they must learn that which they never learnt before:—

My early love, and must we part?  
Yes! other wishes win thee now;  
New hopes are springing in thy heart,  
New feelings brightening o'er thy brow!  
And childhood's light, and childhood's home  
Are all forgot at glory's call;  
Yet, cast one thought in years to come  
On her who loved thee o'er them all.

When pleasure's bowl is filled for thee,  
And thou hast raised the cup to sip,  
I would not that one dream of me  
Should chase the chalice from thy lip;  
But should there mingle in the draught  
One dream of days that long are o'er,  
Then—only then—the pledge be quaff'd  
To her who ne'er shall taste it more!

When love and friendship's holy joys  
Within their magic circle bind thee,  
And happy hearts and smiling eyes,  
As all must wear who are around thee!  
Remember that an eye as bright  
Is dimmed—a heart as true is broken,  
And turn thee from thy land of light,  
To waste on these some little token.

But do not weep!—I could not bear  
To stain thy cheek with sorrow's trace,  
I would not draw one single tear  
For worlds, down that beloved face.

As soon would I, if power were given,  
Pluck out the bow from yonder sky,  
And free the prisoned floods of heaven,  
As call one tear-drop to thine eye.

Yet oh, my love! I know not why  
It is a woman's thought!—but while  
Thou offerest to my memory,  
The tribute should not be—a smile!  
For, though I would not see thee weep,  
The heart, methinks, should not be gay,  
That would the fast of feeling keep  
For her who loves it, far away.

No! give me but a single sigh,  
Pure as we breathed in happier hours,  
When very sighs were winged with joy,  
Like gales that have swept over flowers;  
That uttering of a fond regret,  
That strain my spirit long must pour:  
A thousand dreams may wait us yet:  
Our holiest and our first is o'er.

We feel the witching influence of the bard; we own his sway: the shadows of evening fall around us; the sun is setting in misty gloom; the rain beats against our window; the fire glimmers with its last red embers; the twilight sinks into night; the leaves are strewn upon the ground; the trees are bare; the winds sweep ever and anon through their leafless branches; melancholy thoughts pass over the soul; the past comes before us; the loveliness of earth is clouded with dimness; our mind dwells on the days long since flown; we sink into pensive reveries; our eye falls listlessly on the grate; every sound is hushed save when the autumnal gale howls.

## BISHOP HEBER.

"Hence, in all the ages and countries of civilization, religion has been the parent and fosterer of the fine arts—as of poetry, music, painting, and the like, the common essence of which consists of a similar union of the universal and the individual. In this union, moreover, is contained the true sense of the ideal. Under the old law, the altars, the curtains, the priestly vestments, and whatever else was to represent the beauty of holiness, had an ideal character; and the temple itself was a masterpiece of ideal beauty."

COLERIDGE.

To contemplate Heber, either in the character of a Christian bishop or as a sacred poet, must ever be a pleasing task. With the bard alone we have at present to do; and the very morn on which we write seems to partake much of the gentleness and quiet beauty of his poetry. His strains do not madden the brain, flush the cheek, and quicken the throbbings of the heart; but they breathe a softness and gentleness quite his own. It has been one of our sweetest enjoyments to listen to the melody of his voice, and the mild yet elegant language of his lips. We love to suit the time of reading a favourite author with the distinguishing features of his productions; thus we read Coleridge when the heavens are serene, and the world seems to lie in dreaminess; Cowper, when the winter covers the landscape with snow, and makes us feel deeper and higher delight in the comforts of an English fireside;

and Heber, when the beautiful dawn streaks the horizon with the light of a summer's day. The fair, enchanting loveliness of creation expands the soul, gives it a richer tone, draws out the feelings, lets loose the imagination, weaves a web of glorious thoughts, wraps into a forgetfulness of every-day existence, brightens, radiates, etherealizes the fancy, opens up resplendent visions, fits the spirit to enter fully into the liquid harmonies of the poet.

In Heber's poems, piety shines pre-eminent; we mean the piety of the heart, which includes heirship to the throne of heaven. They are alike suited to the sunny day of success and the dark hour of adversity; they ever yield consolation. Nor are we less pleased with their elegance; they are chaste and exquisite. What can be more beautiful than this?—

By cool Siloam's shady rill  
How sweet the lily grows :  
How sweet the breath beneath the hill  
Of Sharon's dewy rose.

Lo ! such the child whose early feet  
The paths of peace have trod ;  
Whose secret heart, with influence sweet,  
Is upward drawn to God.

By cool Siloam's shady rill  
The lily must decay ;  
The rose that blooms beneath the hill  
Must shortly fade away.

And soon, too soon, the wintry hour  
Of man's maturer age,  
Will shake the soul with sorrow's power,  
And stormy passion's rage.

O Thou, whose infant feet were found  
Within thy Father's shrine,  
Whose years with changeless virtue crowned,  
Were all alike divine :

Dependent on Thy bounteous breath,  
We seek Thy grace alone ;  
In childhood, manhood, age, and death,  
To keep us still thine own.



There is a sweetness and a melting music about these verses which we cannot well describe; enough, however, that they cheer the troubled breast with the melody of immortal hope. There is a strange spell in reading true poetry. However simple the subject, let but the bard just touch it, and immediately it is vital with interest and beauty. Poetry is the language of man's pristine state; the language of angels; the language of the Divinity: its intonations are everlasting, its harmonies imperishable. The purer and the holier we become, the deeper will be our love for its sublime teachings. None ever listened to its grandeurs of song without sighing for immortality, without feeling that the spirit is eternal, without wishing for something more hallowed than aught on earth, without making resolves of future good, without determining to forsake sin, without sending the thoughts far out into the infinite expanse of existence, without creating scenes of quiet, and undisturbed and unruffled bliss. Poetry is truth; truth is poetry: and in as far as poetry reaches its legitimate character, so far does it succeed, come home to the heart, take possession of the mind. There is ever a beauty about truth; there is ever a beauty about poetry. Truth is from the skies, so is poetry; truth will burn with an inextinguishable brilliancy, so will poetry. If the one die, so will the other; they are inseparable and indissoluble. Clear truth of its earthliness, and it is the sweetest, divinest poetry, ever exalting and purifying the whole man. Every vibration of its chords is as the sweep of the hurricane, yet gentle as the soft cooing of the ring-dove. We cannot hear its lofty minstrelsy without beholding the beauty of flower, field, and tree, brook and lake, hill and valley, sky and

twilight, without seeing additional loveliness in the gambols of childhood, the blush of first affection, the devotedness of true-hearted attachment, the bended knee, the meek devotion of a child of God; without thirsting more intensely after a fairer and sunnier clime, and a happier and better home. And sculpture and architecture and painting produce the same effect; the same everlasting potency dwells in all; they issue from the same immortal spirit. We do not say that they influence man always to put into practice what they inspire; that must come from a far higher and Diviner power; but they ever stir his bosom with thrilling and beautiful emotions—they ever tend to that which is good and lovely.

Heber is chiefly known by his prize poem of "Palestine." It displays both learning and elegance, but little or no originality; for chasteness of expression and beauty of design it has, perhaps, few equals. This, on the restoration of the Jews to favour, is very harmonious:—

Lo! cherub hands the golden courts prepare,  
Lo! thrones arise, and every saint is there;  
Earth's utmost bounds confess their awful sway,  
The mountains worship and the isles obey;  
Nor sun nor moon they need—nor day, nor night;  
God is their temple, and the Lamb their light:  
And shall not Israel's sons exulting come,  
Hail the glad beam, and claim their ancient home?  
On David's throne shall David's offspring reign,  
And the dry bones be warm with life again.  
Hark! white-robed crowds their deep hozannas raise,  
And the hoarse flood repeats the sound of praise;  
Ten thousand harps attune the mystic song,  
Ten thousand thousand saints the strain prolong;  
"Worthy the Lamb! omnipotent to save,  
Who died, who lives, triumphant o'er the grave."

Though there is much grace and harmony in these lines, there is little of the deep, thrilling outbreaks of

the poet—no gigantic mass of sound seizing the very soul; the tremendous roll of music sweeps not onwards from Heber's lyre, it is a soft and liquid warble. The versification of this production we acknowledge to be melodious and the language elegant; but the bard moves us not; the heart is untouched, though the ear is continually pleased. There is, however, more poetry and originality in the following, from his fragment of the "World before the Flood:"—

There came a spirit down at eventide  
To the city of Enoch, and the terraced height  
Of Jared's palace. On his turret-top  
There Jared sate, the king, with lifted face,  
And eyes intent on Heaven, whose sober light  
Slept on his ample forehead, and the locks  
Of crisped silver, beautiful in age,  
And—but that pride had dimmed, and lust of war,  
Those reverend features with a darker shade—  
Of saintly seeming,—yet no saintly mood;—  
No heavenward musing fixed that steadfast eye,  
God's enemy, and tyrant of mankind.

Nor is the description of his daughter Ada less beautiful:—

Forth with all her damsels, Ada came,  
As mid the stars the silver-mantled moon,  
In stature thus and form pre-eminent,  
Fairest of mortal maids. Her father saw  
That perfect comeliness, and his proud heart  
In purer bliss expanded. Long he gazed,  
Nor wonder deemed that such should win the love  
Of genius or of angel; such the cheek,  
Glossy with purple youth; such the large eye,  
Whose broad, black mirror, through its silken fringe,  
Glistened with softer brightness, as a star  
That nightly twinkles o'er a mountain well;  
Such the long locks, whose raven mantle fell  
Athwart her ivory shoulders, and o'erspread  
Down to the heel her raiment's filmy fold.

If we might form a judgment from the fragment Heber has left, we believe that it would have been the

finest of his productions, had it been completed: there is much sweetness and beauty about it; and how hallowed and spiritual is Montgomery, and how voluptuous and melting is Moore, and how grand and magnificent is Byron, on the same subject!

But our poet's greatest excellence lay in his hymns: his mind, and habits, and tastes were peculiarly adapted for this kind of composition; every one he has written is characteristic of the meek and gentle Heber. How beautiful is this on the soul-soothing and soul-elevating philosophy of our divine Redeemer:—

Lo, the lilies of the field,  
How their leaves instruction yield!  
Hark to Nature's lesson given  
By the blessed birds of heaven!  
Every bush and tufted tree  
Warbles sweet philosophy:  
"Mortal, fly from doubt and sorrow;  
God provideth for the morrow!"  
"Say, with richer crimson glows  
The kingly mantle than the rose?  
Say, have kings more wholesome fare  
Than we, poor citizens of the air?  
Barns nor hoarded grain have we,  
Yet we carol merrily.  
Mortal, fly from doubt and sorrow;  
God provideth for the morrow!"  
"One there lives, whose guardian eye  
Guides our humble destiny;  
One there lives, who, Lord of all,  
Keeps our feathers, lest they fall:  
Pass we blithely, then, the time,  
Fearless of the snare and lime,  
Free from doubt and faithless sorrow;  
God provideth for the morrow!"

This is really music of heavenly tone and touch; what fulness of richest and deepest consolation is there in such a truth!—the fact itself is poetry; it is the gigantic and sublime principle which entwines the uni-

verse; its light is the light of paradise—its melody the melody of Eden. Fallen humanity deemed not thus of its Almighty Creator; at times, indeed, the verity, in all its grandeur, broke in upon the soul of the heathen philosopher; but it was soon obscured, and clouded, and darkened by mistrust; the day-glory tarried not long—it only came for a little hour—it died as soon as born; it was too high and lofty a doctrine—it was too magnificent for their notion of God—it ill agreed with his other qualities and attributes; it gave a radiance, but it was a radiance on a chaos—all was confusion—nothing was certain—nothing settled. But Christ came; he propounded the law of the better land—he opened up the heart, as it were, of the Divinity; the government of the throne was revealed—its secrets made known; and such was the beauty and sweetness in the language of his lips, that his enemies declared, “Never man spake like this.”

Perhaps one of Heber's most powerful hymns is the following:—

From Greenland's icy mountains,  
From India's coral strand,  
Where Afric's sunny fountains  
Roll down their golden sand—  
From many an ancient river,  
From many a palmy plain,  
They call us to deliver  
Their land from error's chain.

What though the spicy breezes  
Blow soft on Ceylon's isle,  
Though ev'ry prospect pleases,  
And only man is vile—  
In vain, with lavish kindness,  
The gifts of God are strown,  
The heathen, in his blindness,  
Bows down to wood and stone.

Can we, whose souls are lighted  
With wisdom from on high—

Can we to men benighted  
The lamp of life deny ?  
Salvation ! oh, salvation !  
The joyful sound proclaim,  
Till each remotest nation  
Hath learnt Messiah's name.

Waft, waft, ye winds, his story ;  
And you, ye waters, roll,  
Till, like a sea of glory,  
It spreads from pole to pole ;  
Till o'er our ransomed nature  
The Lamb for sinners slain,  
Redeemer, King, Creator,  
In bliss returns to reign !

With the world, missions are despised ; the character they form is derided as paltry and mean ; but its gaze being fixed on semblances, their vision becomes clouded ; they are unable to distinguish the beautiful and true—their mind is dimmed—the falsity, splendid it may be, is worshipped ; but a day is coming, a day of sullen darkness, when the hideousness of the seduction will be revealed ; its drapery of scarlet, and purple, and gold will be stripped ; no more sweetly-scented odours—there will be loathsomeness, and rottenness, and putrefying stench ; custom and fashion will lose their potent spell ; the syren's voice will enchant no longer ; and that which has been termed good, and noble, and manly, and which poets have hymned, and philosophers have lauded, and moralists have praised, and on which have shone the eye of beauty, and wealth, and genius, and upon which have been lavished immortal spirits, and which has been wreathed around with flowery laurels, and scented with earth's richest perfumes, and adorned with earth's comeliest titles, will then be seen naught save a magnificent phasm, leading humanity downwards to the deep, dark dungeon of eternal woe.

But these semblance-worshippers sport themselves with one of the purest developments of the religion of Jesus, and deem it the effect of madness and fanaticism. Meanness, folly, to heal the dying, and cleanse the unholy?—meanness, folly, to visit the forgotten and outcasts of earth's sons, and to tell them that, amid all their depravity, and amid all their impurity, and amid all their degradation, there is a star arisen in the world's horizon, upon which, if any one may gaze, it will pour forth such liquid melodies, that the obdurest heart will melt, and the sternest sinner seek forgiveness?—madness, folly, to tell them that there flows from Calvary a stream, wherein if a man plunge, he shall be “whiter than snow,” and that there issues from Calvary's cross a mellowed light, wherein if a man bathe, he shall become divested of every taint and every spot?—madness, folly, to go to the benighted heathen who worships some idol of his own workmanship, and who sacrifices at its shrine those nearest and dearest to his heart, and to tell him that there is One above who hath made perfect atonement, and that in the “blood shed” there is free and everlasting pardon?—to go to the beclouded pagan, who stands on the shore of the boundless sea, and then, listening to the waves dashing their music on the rocky coast, kneels to the magnificent orb of day rising above the level of the ocean, and to tell him that there is something mightier, and greater, and more gigantic than the sun, to which he renders so much homage, and that this being has wound his love around the world, that that world might be knitted to him for ever?—to go to the wild son of Ishmael, and as he stands bare-footed and bare-headed beneath the midnight sky, and gazes upwards on the starry immensity

breathing its sweet, soft hymn, and whilst awed by the still silence and the profound solitudes of the arid desert, he bends lowly to the vast material universe as to his living god, to tell him that there is One whose lineaments of beauty are far more exquisite, and whose features of majesty are far more glorious, and whose attributes of grandeur are far more divine; and that this stupendous universe, on which he leans as on the Supreme, is but the "goings forth" of this Holy and this Highest, and that there is a communion yet more elevating and soul-enkindling, and a worship yet more hallowed and spirit-blessing, and a service yet more exalted and heart-freeing!

We will tell these lofty beings what it is that missions do. In the place of darkness, they shed the full beauty of immortal day; in the stead of death, they put life; they find the man lower sunk than "the beast which perisheth," and they exalt him to throneship with the Everlasting; they find him going down to the grave without one bright hope, and they strike out the hymn of an imperishable existence; for corruption, they give health; for pollution, purity: they find homes girt around with wretchedness, and within full of misery, and they cast thereon the hallowed beams of blessedness, and love, and peace; and in the desert, where once prowled the savage, is seen the tapering spire pointing heavenwards, and often on the winds comes the silvery chime of its chapel-bell; and in the place of adultery and uncleanness do they place chastity and holiness; and in the stead of violated abodes do they give the lovely shrine of domestic bliss; and in cities do they make good subjects and loyal people; and in kingdoms do they establish the throne, and teach him



that sitteth thereon to rule righteously; and over the whole world do they throw a calm, unruffled repose and ripening plenty.

Thus missions regenerate the world; and what sacrifice is like to one who, for the redemption of the roaming savage, forsakes the land of his fathers, with its thousand memories and its thousand sweets, and bidding adieu to kinsmen whose faces were as the light of heaven, and whose love as deep as a river, and whose kindness made the years pass as one short, sunny hour, betakes himself far off amid strangers and amid foes, to labour till his death-hour for the renovation of immortal spirits? Deride it as they may, sport with it as they will, the missionary character is essentially and truly great; it approaches nearest to the Eternal's; it bears his impress most deeply; its voice is but the voice of the Divinity; its master-principle is the principle that governs him; it is man's highest dignity, man's loftiest bearing.

How exulting the song for Easter-day; enthusiasm is in its every note:—

God is gone up with a merry noise  
Of saints that sing on high;  
With his own right hand and his holy arm  
He hath won the victory!

Now empty are the courts of Death,  
And crushed thy sting, Despair;  
And roses bloom in the desert tomb,  
For Jesus hath been there!

And he hath tamed the strength of hell,  
And dragged him through the sky,  
And captive behind his chariot-wheel  
He hath bound captivity.

God is gone up with a merry noise  
Of saints that sing on high;  
With his own right hand and his holy arm  
He hath won the victory!

A fit hymn for the hour of the church's triumph—it is one of joy. Blackness and gloom were the clouds that before had bedimmed the tomb; there was no life, there was no hope; the cypress and the yew moaned beside the grave; there were sounds of lamentation—sounds of woe; the agonizing moment—so heart-rending, so heart-bursting, so heart-stifling—was without one cheering anticipation of meeting again. Ah, those deep, deep, heavy, gigantic wails were without one consoling assurance!—the parting of husband and of wife, of child and mother, was without one cheering ray; the tearing, breaking, convulsive, forcing away was without one beam of comfort; the last glance of the eye, the last language of the lips, the last pressure of the hand, the last—it was all the last: a separation, a disunion, annihilation, or worse, for ever;—no more to gaze on each other, no more to greet with fondest love, no more kind and gentle services, no more vows of unchanging attachment, no more prattle of babe, no more tenderness, no more love, no more life! What partings, then; what adieus—what farewells! But henceforth there was light; immortality sprang up and everlasting peace; the dying man heard the imperishable notes, caught the divine music; his heart moved with happiness, throbbed with bliss; his countenance shone with brightness, was radiated with glory; the room, the awful, terrible room of death became the antechamber of heaven; the viol and the harp were there; ever and anon would come the harmonies of the invisible world, and the scents of that sweet clime; there were breathings of deepest hope; angels came and tarried; and He, the morning star, stood up the sky, and pointed to a land where there is everlasting reunion, everlasting love.

Such strains as Heber's are suited to the worship of the Everlasting One; they become the lips of the renewed man; they express the feelings of the humble, but believing heart; the truths of the sky are sung to an earthly lyre; we listen to their consoling and divine music; happiness then takes possession of the soul, a gentle soothing peace the spirit; we become assimilated to the angels; they become one with us, we one with them. The hymn is eternal; it rises now, it will rise for ever—it is immortal and imperishable; as ages roll on, it will deepen in its intonations; it will become grander and more sublime. We already feel its kindling, growing power. We awaken to its dignity and gigantic influence. Bear us on thy breast, O song, to that world of love!

## ROBERT BLAIR.

"Look nature through, 'tis revolution all;  
All change, no death; day follows night, and night  
The dying day; stars rise and set, and set and rise:  
Earth takes the example. See, the Summer gay,  
With her green chaplet and ambrosial flowers,  
Droops into pallid autumn: Winter gray,  
Horrid with frost, and turbulent with storm,  
Blows autumn and his golden fruits away,  
Then melts into the spring: soft Spring, with breath  
Favonian, from warm chambers of the south,  
Recals the first. All, to reffourish, fades;  
As in a wheel, all sinks to re-ascend:  
Emblems of man, who passes, not expires."

YOUNG.

THE life of Blair is deficient in all those striking events which cast around the works of an author a deeper feeling of interest: his days, which were passed happily away in the discharge of pastoral duties, remind one of some flowery spot on which the slant rays of the western-sun fall, making it golden with beauty. He was born in 1699; studied at the University of Edinburgh; visited the Continent; in 1731, was ordained, and appointed to the parish of Athelstaneford. He was a man of much learning and taste, and to these he added sincere piety. He laboured quietly among his flock till 1746, when death gave him to the eternal world.

The production on which his immortality rests was published some three years before his death, after having received considerable alterations from Doddridge. It immediately passed through several editions, and has since become a standard work. "The eighteenth century has produced few specimens of blank verse of so powerful and simple a character as that of 'The Grave.' It is a popular poem, not merely because it is religious, but because its language and imagery are free, natural, and picturesque. The latest editor of the poets has, with singularly bad taste, noted some of this author's most nervous and expressive phrases as vulgarisms, among which he reckons that of 'Friendship, the solder of society.' Blair may be a homely and even a gloomy poet in the eye of fastidious criticism; but there is a masculine and pronounced character even in his gloom and homeliness that keeps it most distinctly apart from either dulness or vulgarity. His style pleases us like the powerful expression of a countenance without regular beauty."

The grave is ever to man a gloomy subject; and even when illumined by the bright sunshine of heaven, it retains much of its darkness. To leave the earth, with its sweetly scented flowers, and luxuriant forests, and verdant dales, and grassy meadows, and wide-extended heaths, with their golden gorse, and snow-white hare-bell, and yellow primrose; to leave our native land, with its multitude of silver brooks, and its mouldering ruins, and its beautiful kirk, and its magnificent abbeys, and its fine deep associations, and its pleasant memories; to leave the enchanting creation of poet and of painter, and their bowers of tenderness and truth; to leave our native hills, where we were born and brought up, and

picked the violet and the butter-cup, and bared our brow to the open winds; to leave those around whose heart the fibres of our own are entwined, and to forget their radiant faces, and their affectionate welcomes, and their constant care; to leave our wives and our little ones, is not only a solemn but a bitter thing. It is not palatable to humanity; it needs all the revelations of the Eternal to dispel its dark, black clouds. Naturally we hate and abhor death: to look upon it with any other feeling than that of horror, we require the spiritual breathing of the Holy One: and, indeed, the rich consolation of his mercy, and the unsullied perfection and bliss of the promised inheritance, are scarcely able to deprive the sting of its poison. The majesty and grandeur of that everlasting realm, the hallowed and unruffled felicity of its inhabitants, the unclouded blue of its sky, the eternity of its delights, the absence of all decay, the exquisite softness and tremendous sublimity of its music, and the immaculate beauty of the ever-present Deity are scarcely sufficient to rob death of its heart-rending sorrows.

It is natural to man to love the earth; it is natural that his sympathies should be linked with its varied scenery; on it he first drew breath and gazed on the face of creation, beautiful as the blushing countenance of a bride, and bright as the glory of the Everlasting; on it he felt the gushing of full-hearted affection, and its trees and skies have seen his joyance and gambols in youthful happiness; and beneath his parent's roof he sang hymns to Jesus, and folded his little hands together in prayer to the Most High; and as he grew older, the dim loveliness of its evenings has witnessed his vows and assignations, and firm, unchanging faith: and his home

is here, that temple of hallowed charms. It is no wonder, then, that man looks on death as a terrible foe: it, indeed, may give more than it takes; it may bestow an abode of tranquil peace and unfading sweetness, but for awhile it robs him of those precious beings whose voices are as the voice of God.

Nor are we able even to banish the recollection of the curse; it haunts us everywhere; it ever abides with us; if we go, it follows; if we lie down, it too lies down with us: no time, no place, no station is proof against its assaults; it ever stares us in the face; it mingles in all we do and say: in the festive scene it comes; in the almost roofless hut it departs not.

The Scriptures alone unravel the mystery; they alone breathe comfort, they alone shed light. We indeed have oftentimes endeavoured to deepen that mystery—to stay that comfort—to darken that light: we have spiritualized too much; our bold outlines and strong features are lost in some dim, ethereal air. The Bible abounds in these; why, then, weaken their powerful expression? To a man who loves the vast creation, whose soul is attuned to its divine melody, whose spirit is alive to its every change, and whose thoughts kindle at the magnificence of the starry heavens, and who melts into a tranquil softness whilst gazing on the grey streak of early dawn, or the crimson glories of the setting-sun, and whose mind is enchanted with the exquisite mechanism displayed in the smallest flower and the tiniest insect, to such a man what cold consolation he must receive when the preacher tells him that all these beautiful works of the Eternal will be swept away at death, and that in the new world there is neither tree, nor herb, nor shrub; he would, doubtless, if this

were true, prefer the earth, sinful and sadly fallen as it is, to the bright heaven where hill and dale have no place. But if you tell him, as the Scriptures tell, that there will be the rippling stream, but far more clear; and green meadows, but far more refreshing to the eye; and lofty mountains, but far more gigantic; and shady dells, but far more lonely and still; and rolling oceans, but far more sublime; and sunset and sunrise, but far more gorgeous and magnificent; and the boundless expanse stretching itself into infinitude over head, but far more profound; and delicious and solemn minstrelsy, but far more thrilling than those of this lower orb, and you will stir up within him his very heart, and he will pant for heaven; he will have something to grasp at, something tangible—something more than mere vapoury spiritualism. In his hours of unrest and anxiety will the thought cheer his drooping soul; and the fair loveliness of that nature which he sees and regards will teach him something of those coming glories and those coming joys.

To a man who has given up his whole heart to the tender bliss of domestic life, of what comfort is it to say that there is a happier land above, where all is a deep, hallowed blessedness of peace, but where domestic loves will be for ever severed? It may be, and doubtless is true, that our love to God will be the grand moving principle of our soul; every thought will tower upwards, and every affection fix itself upon Him. But think we friendship and still nearer and dearer ties will be unknown? Think we that those relationships which bind our homes with the flowers of Paradise, and which give to our lips the nectar of Eden, will be altogether banished, and altogether



exiled there? No: there may, indeed, be no marriage-bond; but there will be instead thereof that boundless and unutterable ecstasy of bliss which is oftentimes felt on earth; there will be that outbursting and ever-kindling tenderness of word and look which renders this world even now not unconnected with the skies. And inasmuch as the heart will be holier and better, will those affections and loves gather a diviner beauty and a diviner vigour. We think, then, it is somewhat perilous to say that all such delights will be reft away at death: nor do we deem it in any way a measure calculated to increase the healthy spirituality of the soul. No one of the faculties will be destroyed; they will be purged, indeed, and purified, but they will still remain; they will become more sensibly alive to pleasure, and more keenly sensitive of joy. Because we are to have no tears and no sorrows, are we on that account to be for ever shut out from the beautiful creation of our God, and all the profound felicity of tender friendship and devoted affection? Are the heavens to depart with their million stars, and the ocean with its multitude of waters? Is there no tracery of skill in the Maker's handiwork, and is it too material and low-born to grace the abode of the blessed? The labours of the Eternal are worthy of his power and wisdom, and shall they sink into "utter nothing" and dire annihilation? If He himself found delight in their charms, shall we be too lofty and too spiritual to stoop and reap a kindred joy? If the Lord Jehovah pronounced them very good, shall we not likewise, whilst eyeing their manifold graces, breathe out the same expression of praise? If the bright sons of the morning burst forth into hymnings, divine as

their own existence, at the pristine loveliness of our earth, shall we, who are lower in the scale of intellectual, and perhaps moral, greatness, be too high and too holy to send up our lively songs and low warblings of admiration?

Now let these features of that land to which we are all tending be frequently and fully dwelt upon in the pulpit; and instead of that vagueness, and dimness, and mystery which so generally characterize our descriptions of heaven, let such outlines as these be filled up, and we shall see death stripped of much of its bitter and poisonous nightshade. Shall we drink the juice of the hemlock when we may have golden nectar?—shall we love the foggy November morning better than the refulgent dawn of May?—cling we to the glimmering starlight rather than to the resplendent sunlight?—choose we the turbid waters of a pool into which the dashing rain beats down, stirring up its mud and filth, rather than the waters of life, which are already streaked with the brightness of the coming glory?

We know well that Christ will be all in all; that in his presence is the highest heaven. But surely none can blame us, if when we are told that a flower cannot bloom, nor a star twinkle in that world, we shrink back again to our own earth. Let us know that we are hastening to a region where friendship and faithful love are eternal, and where the soft sighing of the evening gale is not unheard, and our thoughts will be elevated and our mind exalted; it would engross our attention, and imagination would be ever winging itself far upwards into those scenes of unsullied purity; there would be something tangible, something real: our heart would fix its deepest and tenderest affections

there; and what refreshment in weariness, what joy in grief, what happiness in sorrow would be ours! And this present existence would be lighted up with the radiance of heaven, and this present being gladdened with the brilliancy of the eternal throne, and the grave would be despoiled of its gigantic power.

Blair has treated the subject at times much in the bold outline and masculine thought of Shakspeare. A single word, as the sweet-worded Willmott has well observed, often throws a blaze of genius over a line. There is great solemnity and sublimity in many of his passages. As a whole, however, it is not masterly; it rather shines in fragments. What, indeed, can be finer than this:—

See yonder hallowed fane! the pious work  
Of names once famed, now dubious or forgot,  
And buried 'midst the wreck of things which were;  
There lie interred the more illustrious dead.  
The wind is up: hark! how it howls! methinks  
Till now I never heard a sound so dreary.  
Doors creak, and windows clap, and night's foul bird  
Booked in the spire screams loud, the gloomy aisles  
Black plastered, and hung round with shreds of scutcheons  
And tattered coats of arms, send back the sound,  
Laden with heavier airs, from low vaults,  
The mansions of the dead! Roused from their slumbers,  
In grim array the grisly spectres rise,  
Grin horrible, and obstinately sullen,  
Pass and repass, hushed as the foot of night!  
Again the screech-owl shrieks; ungracious sound  
I'll hear no more; it makes one's blood run chill.  
Quite round the pile, a row of reverend elms,  
Coeval near with that, all ragged show,  
Long lashed by the rude winds: some rift half down  
Their branchless trunks, others so thin a top  
That scarce two crows could lodge in the same tree.  
Strange things, the neighbours say, have happened here;  
Wild shrieks have issued from the hollow tombs;  
Dead men have come again and walked about;  
And the great bell has tolled, unrung, untouched!  
Such tales their cheer, at wake or gossiping,  
When it draws near the witching time of night.

Nor is the following description of a school-boy returning home at evening less striking:—

Oft in the lone churchyard at night I've seen,  
By glimpse of moonshine, cheequeing through the trees,  
The schoolboy, with his satchel in his hand,  
Whistling aloud to keep his courage up,  
And lightly tripping o'er the long flat stones  
(With nettles skirted and with moss o'ergrown)  
That tell in homely phrase who lies below.  
Sudden he starts! and hears, or thinks he hears,  
The sound of something purring at his heels.  
Full fast he flies, and dares not look behind,  
Till, out of breath, he overtakes his fellows,  
Who gather round, and wonder at the tale  
Of horrid apparition, tall and ghastly,  
That walks at dead of night, or takes his stand  
O'er some new-opened grave, and (strange to tell)  
Evanishes at crowing of the cock.

The love of the supernatural is an ingredient in every mind; we all give much of our regard to the mysterious and marvellous; and when the light breaks in, dispelling the darkness, there is a feeling of sorrow and regret. There is something in the nature of every man which delights in the wonderful; and perhaps there is nothing, from infancy to old age, which yields us greater enjoyment than sitting at evening around some blazing hearth, telling of apparitions and appearances of unseen realities. We feel dread while such tales linger on the lips: every sound startles, every fancied noise terrifies, every gust of wind affrights, every sudden flare of the fire, and every flicker of the candle, and every shadow cast upon the wall intimates; still we cannot forego their deep and thrilling charms: we listen with intense interest—there is a fascination which we cannot overcome, and a sorcery which we cannot withstand.

“The portrait of the rich man, abandoned to the enjoyment of his possessions, and suddenly surprised

by the approach of death, is conceived with a fearful solemnity, not unlike that which characterized some of our earlier divines. It might, indeed, have been imitated by Blair from the 'Eumenides' of *Æschylus*, the magnificent comparison of human life to a torrent, in one of the sermons of Bossuet, or from a passage in the 'Alexander' of Lee, with whose tragedies he seems to have been familiar."

In that dread moment, how the frantic soul  
Raves round the walls of her clay tenement—  
Runs to each avenue, and shrieks for help,  
But shrieks in vain! How wistfully she looks  
On all she's leaving, now no longer hers!  
A little longer, yet a little longer,  
Oh! might she stay to wash away her stains,  
And fit her for her passage. Mournful sight,  
Her very eyes weep blood; and every groan  
She heaves is big with horror. But the foe,  
Like a staunch murderer, steady to his purpose,  
Pursues her close through every lane of life,  
Nor misses once the track, but presses on;  
Till, forced at last to the tremendous verge,  
At once she sinks to everlasting ruin!

In fine relief to this is the exquisite description of a Christian's death-bed:—

Sure the last end  
Of the good man is peace! How calm his exit!  
Night dews fall not more gently to the ground,  
Nor weary, worn-out winds expire so soft.  
Behold him in the evening-tide of life,  
A life well spent, whose early care it was  
His riper years should not upbraid his green:  
By unperceived degrees he wears away;  
Yet, like the sun, seems larger at his setting.  
High in his faith and hopes, look how he reaches  
After the prize in view! and, like a bird  
That's hampered, struggles hard to get away:  
While the glad gates of sight are wide expanded  
To let new glories in, the first fair fruits  
Of the fast-coming harvest! Then, oh, then,  
Each earth-born joy grows vile, or disappears,

Shrunk to a thing of nought. Oh, how he longs  
 To have his passport signed and be dismissed !  
 'Tis done, and now he's happy ; the glad soul  
 Has not a wish uncrowned. E'en the lag flesh  
 Rests, too, in hope of meeting once again  
 Its better half, never to sunder more.

Two such sketches are enough to stamp immortality  
 on any man: the rushing torrent and impetuous water-  
 fall are characteristic of the one; the gentle stream and  
 limpid brook, of the other.

What tenderness is here :—

Invidious grave ! how dost thou rend in sunder  
 Whom love has knit, and sympathy made one—  
 A tie more stubborn far than Nature's band.  
 Friendship ! mysterious cement of the soul,  
 Sweetener of life, and solder of society,  
 I owe thee much ; thou hast deserved from me  
 Far, far beyond what I can ever pay.  
 Oft have I proved the labours of thy love,  
 And the warm efforts of the gentle heart,  
 Anxious to please. Oh ! when my friend and I,  
 In some thick wood have wandered heedless on,  
 Hid from the vulgar eye, and sat us down  
 Upon the sloping cowslip-covered bank,  
 Where the pure, limpid stream has slid along  
 In grateful errors through the underwood,  
 Sweet murmuring, methought the shrill-tongued thrush  
 Mended his song of love ; the sooty blackbird  
 Mellowed his pipe, and softened every note ;  
 The eglantine smelled sweeter, and the rose  
 Assumed a dye more deep ; whilst every flower  
 Vied with its fellow-plant in luxury  
 Of dress. Oh, then the longest summer's day  
 Seemed too, too much in haste ; still, the full heart  
 Had not imparted half—'twas happiness  
 Too exquisite to last. Of joys departed,  
 Not to return, how painful the remembrance !

## THOMAS DAVIS.

"There is nothing can please a man without love; and if a man may be weary of the wise discourses of the Apostles, and of the innocency of an even and private fortune, or hates peace, or a fruitful year, he hath reaped thorns and thistles from the choicest flowers of Paradise; for nothing can sweeten felicity itself but love; and when a man dwells in love, then the breasts of his wife are pleasant as the droppings upon the hill of Hermon; her eyes are fair as the light of heaven; she is a fountain sealed, and he can quench his thirst, and ease his cares, and lay his sorrows down upon her lap, and can retire home to his sanctuary and refectory, and his gardens of sweetness and chaste refreshments. No man can tell but he that loves his children, how many delicious accents make a man's heart dance in the pretty conversation of those dear pledges; their childishness, their stammering, their little angers, their innocence, their imperfections, their necessities, are so many little emanations of joy and comfort to him that delights in their persons and things."

JEREMY TAYLOR.

IN a world of bustle and anxiety, it is sweet and refreshing to hear, ever and anon, the song of peace and the hymn of faith; they cheer and exalt the depressed spirit; they gladden and raise the sorrowful heart.

"Songs from the Parsonage"—the very name is charming. To us it is associated with the following scene—The shadows of night were fast hastening down, when we stood gazing upon an ancient church and its burial ground: it rose upon a gentle slope, while a fine row of lofty elms formed a suitable background; the rocks cawed—the winds moaned through the luxuriant

foliage; all else was silent. Opposite these stood the pretty rectory, enshrouded by a clump or two of fine dark firs; its jet-black timbers on a ground of pure white, its green ivy mantling the walls, its crimson roses, its starry clematis, its struggling woodbine, its old-fashioned windows, formed one of the sweetest homes we ever saw. Between the parsonage and the church were four large fish-ponds, on whose sides grew some noble sycamores. It was like the creation of some poet's fancy; the domestic retreat of his loveliest imagination; it was the realization of some dream: on tree, and flower, and house, and water, and church, there was a calm, unruffled quietude. The shades deepened and deepened; the twilight became dimmer and dimmer; the beautiful scene became every moment more indistinct; the solitude and the loneliness increased; every object sank away in the darkness; the winds dropped, the cawing of the rooks ceased: suddenly the moon peered above the horizon, and, oh! how exquisitely serene were all things; "no stir of air was there, not so much life as on a summer's day robs one light seed from the feathered grass." The tower, the roof of the cottage, the tree-tops were silvered by its radiance. We stood and gazed; how strikingly still! But a sound arose; it was a holy hymn; it seemed the divinest music, and our eyes were filled with tears as it brought to our mind the hallowed eventides of our own hearth and our own beloved ones.

The poems are in perfect keeping with their title, and are worthy of a minister of the apostolic English church: they are somewhat similar to the beautiful strains of the good George Herbert. The versification is correct, and often elegant.



How full of confiding trust is this:—

Oh ! how profoundly tranquil is the peace  
Of him whose mind, my God, is stayed on thee !  
The storm may come, and earthly hopes may cease,  
And all that once was full of joy, may be  
Lost and for ever ; but while he may see  
Thine arm directing, let the storm beat on ;  
It will not pass unheeded : but shall he  
Tremble and murmur, upon whom hath shone,  
From the glad Son of Righteousness, a ray  
Showing the pathway to a home above,  
Where that same hand ere long shall wipe away  
His every tear, which now doth smite in love ?  
No : from his heart he prays, Thy will be done,  
And even in grief can feel Thy will and his are one.

And this, suggested by a vase of flowers, is not less beautiful:—

How fair must be the flowers of Paradise,  
Earth's to surpass in beauty ! With what skill  
Must heaven have formed and blent their wondrous dyes,  
When upon these the eye can gaze until  
All is a dream of loveliness ; and still  
With every closer gaze new beauties rise,  
Anew to please, to charm, and with surprise,  
Devout as deep, to animate and fill !  
Oh ! for a seraph's wings to flee away !  
To mount and bathe in beauty and in love—  
Love as it glows beneath a heavenly ray,  
And beauty as it blooms in climes above :  
To dwell where God that decks the earth with flowers,  
Himself for ever dwells amid celestial bowers.

With this the mind sympathizes: for who has not stood in calm, deep thought before these stars of earth, and mused on Paradise. its blushing flowers, its enchanting sweetness, its perfect stillness, its tall, majestic cedars, its lofty pines, its clear waters, its blissful pair? Scenes of Eden's unruffled peace have broken in upon us, and we have gazed delighted on its orient mornings and its dewy evenings; its gales have wafted to the sense the odoriferous perfume of its garden; the

music of its rivers has sounded on the ear; the liquid notes of its nightingales have arisen upwards and floated onwards; the benignity and hallowed felicity of its newly created inhabitants have thrown over the enchanting spot a deeper and a more delicious beauty, and we have been subdued into a gentle—we will not say sadness, for we have a “higher happiness than theirs; a happiness won through struggle with inward and outward foes, the happiness of power and moral victory, the happiness of disinterested sacrifices and wide-spread love, the happiness of boundless hope, and of ‘thoughts which wander through eternity.’ Still there are times when the spirit, oppressed with pain, worn with toil, tired of tumult, sick at the sight of guilt, wounded in its love, baffled in its hope, and trembling in its faith, almost longs for ‘the wings of a dove, that it might fly away,’ and take refuge amidst ‘the shady bowers,’ the ‘vernal airs,’ the ‘roses without thorns,’ the quiet, the beauty, the loveliness of Eden.”

We wish, too, in these moments that we were some subtler essence, material and yet spiritual, that our souls might commingle with the perfumes of flowers; become the sweet scent, and yet retain the consciousness of distinct and separate being—atom united to atom; incorporated with the rich odour, and yet retain the sense of our own individual life. Thus may it be in the happier clime: in our tenderest embraces we may pass into the object of our love—become one with it—in form and shape to appear but one, and yet have all the vividness of a self-existence.

We love flowers, because they tell us of Paradise; we delight to look on their blossoms, because they remind us of friends; every one is enwreathed with

some sweet though pensive association; every gem sparkles with a tear: we gaze upwards on the stars, and think of the departed; we gaze downwards on the flowers, and it recalls the past; both are intimately connected with bygone years; our childhood wove the web, and our manhood has kept it sacred. We love it; we cannot part with it; our heart has wrought out a golden casket of imperishable workmanship, and within we have placed it with fondest care. The stars of heaven and the stars of earth are our mementoes of affection: those grace the black, ebon vault of midnight; these, the beautiful planet of our own; but both shall fade, and with them our pensive thoughts and feelings. Eternity shall flow in, crowned with a chaplet of the immortal amaranth; it will bloom and blossom under the immediate radiance of the throne; Eternity will roll, roll on, but it shall spread its petals to the sun without change and without decay; the twilight of melancholy shall pass away, as some morning mist, before the brightness of that resplendent clime; the rose will be without a thorn, the heart without a sigh; the gentle gales will sweep onwards, bearing all-delicious scents to far-off worlds; then shall man's soul be pure and spotless as the Everlasting.

But the joyous lark, the fairy butterfly, the whispering woods, the soft breezes, all remind us of Paradise and heaven: the former is faded and gone, the latter is yet our own. Every bud, and every tree, and every brook, and every insect, and every bird tell us of the better land; and the throbbing and quenchless spirit of man gives reality to the fact; the grandeur and the loveliness of nature ever feedeth the stirring flame,

ever increaseth the intense thirst. We gaze on some quiet landscape, mellowed into golden beauty by the sun, its waters glancing beneath the light, its forests irradiated with brightness, its distant steeple shining like some silver streak of coming day, its sheep reclining beneath the shade of tree and hedge, its butterflies alighting on the wild-rose and woodbine, and immediately we feel the burnings within—the longings after immortality; or we stand before the blue mountains with their crests of snow, and our pantings become more sublime and ethereal; their gigantic forms seem part of another world; with every-day life they have nothing to do; they are the emblems of some eternal existence; they contrast themselves strangely with the turmoil of cities; whilst looking on them, we are divested of self, we merge into the one mighty spirit; an everlastingness comes over us; the noise and tumult of man cease here; the larch and fir which skirt the sides give a melancholy tone to the mind; the mortal is lost in the immortal; the corruptible, in the incorruptible; the transitory becomes firm, fixed, immovable; our fickleness changes itself into a deep and imperishable constancy; our thoughts take the hue of heaven—they are vast and infinite; our aspirations quicken; our feelings are spiritualized:—

Witness this one fair lake, on whose side  
So oft at even 'tis my joy to roam—  
Gazing upon a thousand things that hide  
Their beauties, till the heart doth feel at home  
With Nature's self beneath her open dome—  
That I do love the waters, and the woods,  
And simple flowers that bloom in solitudes,  
And the green meadows, and the soft blue skies,  
And mountains with their ever-changeful dyes;

And that I praise with no feigned melodies :  
Yet, did the fairest scene that ever beamed  
On my rapt gaze—the loveliest morn or even,  
Beneath whose spell I ever stood and dreamed,  
Leave but a deeper thirst—this spirit needs a heaven !

There is something within us all which speaks of everlasting life and beauty: those seasons are far from few in which overwhelming thoughts rush on the soul; we pant after eternal realities; we weep because all around us is transitory; we sorrow because all is given to decay. Man thus ever thinks: he gazes on the once blossoming rose, it is now shrivelled, and dried, and without loveliness; he looks on the pale, marble features of his own little one ere it is laid in the tomb, and he meditates on the instability of all things here below; but in the midst of sadness there is hope; he feels within himself an imperishable essence. Man is the child of anticipation; in his happiest hours he dreams of something more lasting and exquisite still; he creates something purer, and holier, and better.

And oh, how sweet when the pale moon and the silver stars glimmer in the evening sky, when the leaves fall rustling to the earth, when the low winds come moaning by, to let loose the soul to revel in its imaginings! The aspect of nature, so calm, yet so melancholy, throws the mind into musings on its future destiny; there is a solemnity in the twilight heavens, and the dim world; there is, too, a deep, hushed stillness on the thoughts of the heart. In such an hour, what scenes of quiet bliss arise! And yet we feel a sadness mingling its low music with our better hopes; it clings, it cleaves to us; we are bound down to this estranged orb; we cannot get free; we are in the midst of decay; we long to be where change is un-

known; nothing satisfieth but perfect glory; music and eloquence, architecture, painting, sculpture, poetry, do but increase and quicken these pantings after immortal, incorruptible, inextinguishable beauty; they are glimpses of the unseen good, gleams of the radiant loveliness; they stir, move, dilate our being; they are part of that exquisite happiness we lost when Adam fell: all faded not then; we still possess something divine, something of the original brightness.

These are periods when realities dawn upon us; we behold our condition; we long after freedom; the vanities of this passing, wo-begone scene appear in their proper light; they belong not to immortals hastening heavenward. But the world turns on us again; we are seduced by its alluring pomps and pleasures; we forget our mightier existence; time flies onwards, and they return with fresh vigour and glory; we gaze on revelation's page, and read that man can never die; we are cheered; we lay hold of the soothing fact; it lighteth up the being, it radiates the inner shrine; the falling leaves, and the moaning winds, and the dim earth, and the pale moon, and the twinkling stars, become then the echo of this great and sublime verity; we feel that we have sinned; that we have wandered far from the fold: we look up for pardon; we have it in the blood of the Holiest; on him we henceforth lean, on him for ever repose; death and the grave are stripped of their terrors; the tomb closes; Paradise visions itself in tints of everlasting beauty; its overhanging willows, as the breeze rustles by, breathe out the music of immortality; we think of Eden, faded, but weep not; there is a sweeter land above, without change, and without decay.

Why have we this love for the unseen and eternal?—whence, then, this longing after invisible things?—why this fondness for something beyond the barrier of our present existence, if there is nought but annihilation there, if nothing but profound nonentity, why this desire for spiritual knowledge?—why this casting forward the inextinguishable thought into the unknown, if being is not there?—why these aspirations, which are in the bosom of every man, after a more ethereal and perfect nature?—why does imagination so often kindle its fires in the world beyond, if we are not allied to something infinitely greater than anything on earth?—why these pantings after some lasting good, if we have no tie and no bond which unites us to the Holiest?—why these golden glimpses of the coming heaven?—why these refulgent gleams of beauty?—why these liquid hymnings of praise?—why these shadowings of the lovely and the true?—why, oh why, the dawn streaking so often the horizon of man's soul and illuming its mysterious abysses with glory, if we are not the sons of the universal King and the universal Lord?

The poem on "Heavenly Rest," for beauty and elegance, is exquisite: we deem it the sweetest flower in the bouquet, the brightest gem in the casket.

Man in the morning to his work goes forth,  
And rests at even:  
Christian, remember, labour is for earth,  
Repose for heaven.

Who now sows precious seed, though it may be  
Too oft with weeping,  
Shall, if he patiently await, see  
A joyous reaping.

Fruit shall be gathered, whose abundant store  
Shall never perish;

But blissful love, where weeping shall be o'er,  
For ever cherish.

Then scatter freely, nor withhold thy hand  
Till close of even :  
Earth is the place of toil—the better land  
Of rest is heaven.

Our poet is a domestic man. Amid the sanctities of a hallowed home he gathers his choicest mercies; and, indeed, the blissful retreat is ever to mortals the richest blessing: our selfishness passes away in its sunshine; we become softened and exalted in its holy affections; our being is raised and dignified; we are renewed in the bright image of our creation; the soul is swayed by the amiabilities of angels; love, then, is the all-pervading element, the all-pervading principle. And the eye is ever beaming with tenderness, and the heart ever throbbing with affection, and the being ever dilating with an unutterable and imperishable bliss. Bright intelligences hover over it with delight; unspotted beings bless it with holiest smiles; woman therein finds her highest reward—assumes her noblest character: the sorrows and the trials of life are lightened and assuaged, and the glories of the earth and sky become more resplendent and divine.

Somehow or other, we have been too much accustomed to look for beauty out of the home circle; in this we have greatly erred: the centre of all real beauty is home, it is the concentration of loveliness; earth possesses no other spot more truly fascinating. In vain do we look elsewhere; all the affections that perfume this hallowed recess are highly poetical, each is pre-eminently beautiful: the eye of childhood, its rainbow hopes, its courageous daring, its deep gushes of tenderness, its full confiding trust, its sweet sim-



plicity, its firm reliance, are all glowing with the divinest poetry; the throbbing feelings, the watchful care, the thousand sacrifices of the parental love, are equally embued with the spirit of ethereal grace; the endearments of an affianced pair, their devoted and clinging attachment, their resolve never to part from each other; their cherishing regard, their innumerable acts of fondness, their chiding the anticipation, their readings, their twilight hours, their evening vespers, are each and all characterized with the purest light: all that is homeborn is unutterably fair and good; the open-hearted child, the yearning mother, the kind father, the young wife, the tender husband, are all poetical objects. Oh! how much beauty, and loveliness, and glory circle the domestic abode; and thus it is that we delight to see the expression of this truth embodying itself in the description of poet and the work of painter, for the soul that never thought before may be led to prize it now, and the heart that never throbbed when gazing on such holy scenes, may be bound once and for ever by its pure and powerful influence.

"Children," says the Scottish poet, "are as dew-drops at day-spring on a seraph's locks, roses that bathe about the well of life;" and the Oracles, using another simile, have proclaimed, in the deep intonations of their music, "happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them." And, indeed, no one can look upon a child without an inexpressible joy: they are comparatively innocent and untainted by sin; they exhibit so much openness and confiding affection. If they love, they will come and throw their little arms around your neck, and kiss again and again; they act from

feeling ; hence they so often judge correctly. They are bound by no fashion but the fashion of affection, bound by no tie but the tie of souls ; their very glances bring Eden in all its unfading beauty before us, their very talk is more than the sweetest melody ; their eye is undimmed, their countenance unclouded. Bursts of glorious sunshine seem ever and anon to break from their free and lovely faces : we deem again that earth is without a sorrow, earth without a thorn. It is true they sometimes quarrel, but it is a quarrel quickly ending in love and tenderness ; some passing shadow, soon to be lost in the brightness of a clear blue firmament.

Their domain is home ; they are the pledges of a true and holy faith ; the cup of labour becomes then the cup of blessing ; the curse of sin falls less heavily, the bitterness of our rebellion sinks less deeply ; mercy is mixed with judgment ; the domestic hearth is Paradise regained, is Eden restored : children are its loveliest, fairest flowers. They are smiled on each day by the sun of love ; they are breathed on by the breath of love : morning, noon, and night, they are carried to the throne, and blessings sought : they learn "the truth as it is in Jesus ;" it refines, expands, exalts them ; they become more divinely bright, more divinely beautiful : "Of such is the kingdom of heaven :"—

What were the grove without the wild  
And merry warbler in the trees ?

What were the home without the child,  
Whose laughter speaks his ecstasies ?

The minstrel may describe the one ;  
But would ye rightly know the other,  
Go, ask the father, who hath done  
His toil, and hastes to child and mother.

Or rather—for the words of men  
Feebly from swelling hearts arise—  
Go, mark the gladsome child, and then  
Look up into the mother's eyes.  
O, sweet it is in woods to roam  
And list the merry warblers wild!  
But sweeter far to hear at home  
The dancing, laughing, joyous child!

Such is the delight children yield—yields the rose a sweeter? such the happiness they give—give the stars a greater? Flowers are emblematical of their beauty; the stars significant of their brightness. They, indeed, are far more beautiful and bright than either: their little prattle, their beaming countenance, their confiding truth, their open-hearted affection, their looks of thrilling tenderness, their light and joyous step, their candour, their honesties, their aspirations after something higher and nobler, their tears for the distress of the poor, their blushings of heroic purpose, their kindling souls at the tale of self-sacrifice, their gratitude, their deep remembrance, their free and boisterous mirth, their sincerity, their fervent prayers, their ardent affection, are all so many silken cords or golden chains which bind us to children. The creature is ever the most exquisite of God's workmanship: the soul, as it issues from the Creator, is ever thus his most resplendent jewel: it is as the May-day of our hopes, the dawn of our bliss.

Our poet has thus sweetly written on all subjects connected with the domestic affections. His poems scent of the rich incense of a happy home; they breathe the softness, and peace, and tenderness of that holy retreat: his talents are suited to portray its worth and beauty. To those who love their fireside will this work be acceptable. The verses to his Own

Beloved, to their First-born, to their Daughter, are redolent with these feelings. "The Dewdrop," and the lines on "Evening," show strongly his deep-rooted love of Nature; but it is to home that he clings and cleaves; it is his element, his earthly Paradise. And God hath cast thereon the sunshine of his favour, and the bright radiance of his countenance, and the unutterable blessings of his mercy. The smile of heaven is on it—the beams of the Holy One are there.

## EMILY.

"Of the great number to whom it has been my painful professional duty to have administered in the last hours of their lives, I have sometimes felt surprised that so few have appeared reluctant to go to 'the undiscovered country, from whose bourne no traveller returns.' Many, we may easily suppose, have manifested this willingness to die, from an impatience of suffering, or from that passive indifference which is sometimes the result of debility and extreme bodily exhaustion. But I have seen those who have arrived at a fearless contemplation of the future, from faith in the doctrine which our religion teaches. Such men were not only calm and supported, but even cheerful in the hour of death; and I never quitted such a sick chamber without a wish that 'my last end might be like theirs.'"—SIR HENRY HALFORD.

In the year 1759, there came a poem bearing the handwriting of one Emily to the adjudicators of the Seatonian prize. It spoke of death; but another was thought to speak in bolder and finer tones, and it was returned. Who he was, what he was, whence he came, whither he went, we know not; whether the son of wealthy parents, fondled on the breast of beauty, courted by the great, or whether the child of poverty, and who had by struggles obtained an university education, we cannot tell; whether born amid some wild, mountainous scenery, with nothing but rocks, and pines, and wild goats, and waters, and the blue heavens to look upon, or whether brought forth beneath some

lowly roof in England's great metropolis, we are unable to discover.

There is something touching in this brief memorial—a few lines tell it all; the history of a life is compressed within a sentence. His fears, his hopes, his aspirations, his throbbings after bliss, his romantic schemes of happiness, his labours, his rambles, his melancholies, his disappointments, his loves, are wholly unknown. So passes man, and the son of man! His poem is all that we have; it is the *hic jacet*; it tells of some one, but of whom we cannot ken. There is the mouldering tombstone, it is partly covered with moss; nothing more than the name is traceable; his fate melts the soul, it invests the object of our regard with a sanctity, it throws around him a deep interest: across the heavens came a star, and waned; among the students came a poet, who sang of sable death, and perished.

We often think of his resting-place. Where is it? Is it in some shady dell, near which rose that village spire, on which he used to gaze so often at the sunset hour? or is it in some churchyard now built upon and forgotten? Is it by the murmuring of the silver stream, or by the city's constant hum? The eye which once grew eloquent whilst gazing on Beauty is orbless and rayless now; the pulse has forgotten to beat, the throbbings of the heart are no longer heard; he lies silent; no sound disturbs him: the birds may sing in brake and field, the wild flower may rear its loveliness to the summer sun, the voice of reaper may rise upwards, the perfumes of rose may scent every breath of wind, the stars may shine resplendently, and again fade out, the storm may bellow, and the light-

nings gleam on the dark, tempestuous blackness, the day-god may ascend, and the day-god may descend, but our poet is as unconcerned as if all was silence and inactivity.

Ah, once and it was otherwise; his heart vibrated when gazing on creation; like us, he loved the gay glory of the earth; like us, pensive thoughts would steal over his soul at the evening hour; and he, too, would think of friend, and kin, and love, in that dim, tranquillizing season; and the stars of heaven breathed a spiritual inspiration, and that silver moon looked beautifully pale; they spoke in language liquid as the nightingale's, when heard across some gentle stream, yet deep, deep as their own beauty; and this would cheer him, when, sitting by the midnight lamp, he turned the classic page, and hoped, and sighed, and prayed for immortality.

But we have one expression of his heart: it is original, pathetic, beautiful. Hearken:—

The festive roar of laughter, the warm glow  
Of brisk-eyed joy, and friendship's genial bowl,  
Wit's seasoned converse, and the liberal flow  
Of unsuspecting youth, profuse of soul,  
Delight not ever; from the boisterous scene  
Of riot far, and Comus' wild uproar,  
From folly's crowd, whose vacant brow serene  
Was never knit to wisdom's frowning lore,  
Permit me, ye time-hallowed domes, ye piles  
Of rude magnificence, your solemn rest,  
Amid your fretted vaults, and lengthening aisles,  
Lonely to wander; no unholy guest  
That means to break, with sacrilegious tread,  
The marble slumbers of your monumented dead.  
Permit me, with sad musings, that inspire  
Unlaboured numbers apt, your silence drear  
Blameless to wake, and with the Orphean lyre,  
Fittingly attempered, soothe the merciless ear

Of Hades, and stern Death, whose iron sway  
Great nature owns through all her wide domain.

Know, on the stealing wing of time shall flee  
Some few, some short-lived years, and all is past ;  
A future bard these awful domes may see,  
Muse o'er the present age, as I the last,  
Who, mouldering in the grave, yet once, like you,  
The various maze of life were seen to tread,  
Each bent their own peculiar to pursue,  
As custom urged or wilful nature led :  
Mixed with the various crowd's inglorious clay,  
The nobler virtues undistinguished lie ;  
No more to melt with beauty's heaven-born ray,  
No more to wet compassion's tearful eye,  
Catch from the poet raptures not their own,  
And feel the thrilling melody of sweet renown.

Where is the master-hand, whose semblant art  
Chiselled the marble into life, or taught  
From the well-pencilled portraiture to start  
The nerve that beat with soul, the brow that thought ?  
Cold are the fingers that in stone-fixed trance  
The mute attention rivetting, to the lyre  
Struck language ; dimmed the poet's quick-eyed glance,  
All in wild raptures flashing heaven's own fire.  
Shrunk is the sinewed energy, that strung  
The warrior's arm. Where sleeps the patriot breast  
Whilom that heaved impassioned ?—where the tongue  
That lanced its lightning on the tow'ring crest  
Of sceptred insolence, and overthrew  
Giant oppression, leagued with all her earth-born crew ?

All in the dust; the song, the dance, and eloquent  
oration no longer move them; the whirlwind's sweep  
and the thistle's down pass over them, alike unnoticed  
and alike unfelt; the blue heavens gaze down as before;  
no change in them; the earth is fresh and beautiful as  
then; it looks not old; we it is who change, we  
it is who moulder, we it is who are forgotten. The  
heavens and the earth live—live; we die, we fade  
away, we sink into oblivion; every hour but bears us  
to the tomb, every moment but hurries us to the grave;



thus humanity passes onwards, making room for those who follow. Oh, one would think that the ocean, and the sky, and the dry land would weep! but no, they are silent; they move, but there is no busy hum; they revolve, but there is no change. Their elements remain; nature tells us nothing, it gives no certain hope; we cannot, we dare not trust it; "a dark impenetrable curtain shrouds us in, of which the sight is fearful, and the neighbourhood appalling. All men are moving towards this dark verge with ceaseless and anxious motion; and sometimes it will approach and shroud up multitudes prematurely in its invisible womb, and all trace of them is for ever gone: it flits and shifts before us with fearful incertitude, and no man laying himself down at night is sure that he will rise again in the morning among his friends and in his native land; but though it shift awhile, this gloomy bourne of our pilgrimage hath an unshifting limit, behind which it never recedes; and soon and the extreme angle of that limit is reached by all. On we move with endless succession, helpless as the sheep to the slaughter; and the moment we touch the dark confine, we disappear, and all clue of us is lost; you may cry aloud, but we hear and answer not; you may give us any signal, but we see and return it not. No voice cometh from within the curtain, all there is silent and unknown; how it fares with them, whether they merge at once into another country, whether they are out at sea, by what compass or map they steer, or whether they are lost in that gulf and abyss of being—no man for thousands and thousands of years had the shadow of an imagination. It was very mysterious; each man as he passed 'shuffled off his mortal coil,' left us his slough, and nothing of himself; his reason, his feel-

ings, his society, his love, all went with him; here with us was left all of him that we were wont to see, and touch, and handle; how he could exist apart from these, the helps and instruments of being, was all a phantom and a dream; the existence, if existence there was, no human faculties could fix a thought upon; his spirit, if spirit there was, takes its fate in cold nakedness; but how it dwells, or feels, or suffers, or enjoys, when thus divested, is altogether incomprehensible." The rose that blossomed yesterday, and threw upwards its perfume to the clear sky, is to-day in the dust, its form, its beauty, its odour gone; the tree which spread its foliage to a hundred summer suns has fallen in the forest; and to-morrow, and no vestige will remain. How this can be, we know not; all is mysterious; and our kinsmen and friends—a few years since, and we received their morning and evening salutations—now they are in the tomb. Do they still exist? is the soul imperishable? does the heart vibrate, though in another clime? do they forget the earth? remember they their former being and their former state? are they changed into something more glorious? do they weep? do pensive reveries breathe their sad music in that other land? is it dark there as here? are there struggles? is there woe? or is all blessedness, a realm of unruffled rest and unbroken calm? Creation is silent, with her myriad stars, and million forms. Look upwards:—

Fast to the driving winds the marshalled clouds  
Sweep discontinuous o'er the ethereal plain!  
Another still upon another crowds,  
All hastening downwards to their native main.  
Thus passes o'er through varied life's career,  
Man's fleeting age; the seasons as they fly  
Snatch from us in their course, year after year,  
Some sweet connexion, some endearing tie.

The parent, ever honoured, ever dear,  
Claims from the filial breast the pious sigh;  
A brother's urn demands the kindred tear,  
And gentle sorrows gush from friendship's eye.  
To-day we frolic in the rosy bloom  
Of jocund youth—the morrow knells us to the tomb.

How expressive the last couplet! how pregnant with meaning! the experience of ages seems compressed therein; it is a fine, masculine sweep of the lyre. Then followeth the ruthless catalogue of the "thousand maladies" which "are posted round with wretched man to wage eternal strife unseen."

In it is gathered all the hideousness of death; there is no one redeeming feature; not one ray issues from heaven; the horizon is all dark; the hemisphere is covered with black, heavy clouds; there is not the glimmering of a single star; it is one ebon mass. The earth seems to be a lone, sepulchral abode; we move in uncertain twilight; the tarnished brightness comes from the spirit; it reveals the chaotic gloom; the winds bear on their bosom the sighs of broken hearts and the pangs of separations; the cry of despair, the voice of throbbing agony, the dying wail, the shriek of severed loves rise upwards to the thunderous sky; vitality is in ruins, existence is broken up, being is snapped asunder, and "cast as some noisome weed away."

But we tremble not, we do not shrink, we have no fear; the dawn is breaking on this sad night. In decay we live; our dust is vital with immortality; death opens the high, ponderous gates of eternity; it draws aside the veil; it takes from us our frail existence, and gives imperishable being; the sick-room resounds with cheerful melodies; the dying eye is lighted up; the pale countenance is irradiated with brightness; the

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languid and the parched lips grow eloquent again; there are sounds as if an angel trod; there are scenes as if heaven were revealed; there are glances as if the Eternal smiled; the chamber scents with the sweetest odours, beams with the clearest sunshine; there are lookings forward, holy anticipations, delicious hopes:—

The good alone are fearless ; they alone,  
Firm and collected in their virtue, brave  
The wreck of worlds, and look unshrinking down  
On the dread yawnings of the ravenous grave :  
Thrice happy, who the blameless road along  
Of honest praise, hath reached the vale of death !  
Around him, like ministrant cherubs, throng  
His better actions, to the parting breath  
Singing their blessed requiems ; he the while  
Gently reposing on some friendly breast,  
Breathed out his benizons ; then with a smile  
Of soft complacence, lays him down to rest,  
Calm as the slumbering infant : from the goal  
Free and unbounded flies the disembodied soul.

## JAMES HURDIS.

"Those antique churches, those low, massy doors, were raised in days that are long gone by; around those walls, nay, beneath our very feet, sleep those who, in their generations, helped each, in his little sphere, to build up our country to her present pitch of greatness. We catch a glimpse of that deep veneration, of that unambitious simplicity of mind or manner, that we would fain hold fast amidst our growing knowledge and its inevitable remodelling of the whole framework of society; we are made to feel the desire to pluck the spirit of faith, the integrity of character, and the whole heart of love to kin and country, out of the ignorance and blind subjection of the past; therefore it is that I have always loved the village-church, that I have delighted to stroll far through the summer fields, and hear still onward its bells ringing happily; to enter and sit down among its rustic congregation, better pleased with their murmur of responses, and their artless but earnest chant, than with all the splendour and parade of more lofty fabrics."—HOWITT.

PERHAPS there is no other country in which villages present so many charming and quiet beauties as England; it is a land of pastoral hamlets, no less than of magnificent cities: their cottages, adorned with the clustering rose and honeysuckle, form, during the soft summer time, many a scene of picturesque sweetness; the rainbow is not more beguiling to calm repose than these flower-enshrouded homes.

But beautiful as our villages undoubtedly are, we think that they may be greatly improved by infusing a more refined taste among the people; and we shall con-

sider a few points conducive to this, ere we proceed to speak on that subject which has led to these remarks.

The most suitable person to carry village-improvement into effect is the pastor; nor is this in the least derogatory to those higher and loftier objects to which his life is consecrate. It is true, indeed, that he is primarily placed over his flock for spiritual ends; but is therefore the temporal and intellectual advancement to be forgotten or neglected?

He will begin at home; his own house will be a pattern of neatness and beauty. The influence will be great; one little knows where to put limits to such a potent and subtle power: there are no dwellings which claim so much of our interest and love; they adorn the landscape; all the associations which hover around are pure and holy; the chapel-bell gives a strange, unutterable sweetness to an evening scene, and the loveliness of a secluded parsonage is not without its witchery.

The garden will also be continually looked after; it will be no unworthy occupation for the pastor to tend it with his own hands—it will teach him much: the earth, seed-time, and harvest are significant of revealed truth; it will give a freshness and a vigour to his frame, a healthy and cheerful tone to his mind. There is in the cultivation of a garden that wherein the taste for the beautiful may be displayed: flowers, and shrubs, and the blossoms of an orchard are everywhere a lovely sight; but lovelier nowhere than when connected with a parsonage: he will therefore avail himself of all these favourable feelings.

The church will claim a large share of his regard. How many have been left to decay by the negligence of

their ministers!—and while he repairs and adorns the building, he will not forget its burial-ground. The church-yard is hallowed by the most solemn memories; it possesses a charm peculiarly its own; it will be his constant care; the slopes will be kept neatly cropped by a few sheep; their calm, quiet beauty, and the music of their tinkling bell, and their gentle looks, will throw a grace over the spot; other animals, on no account, should be turned in; they are repugnant to our sweetest associations; a few yews and limes might be judiciously planted; they harmonize with the holy enclosure; flowers will enrich with their perfumes and enliven with their summer loveliness; let these be reared, and open their blossoms to the luxuriant day, and shed their thousand scents on the balmy breeze.

Who does not love these quiet spots!—how sweet to wander among the tombs!—a pensive peace steals over the soul. The venerable church, the sheep, the trees, the flowers, the new-shorn grass, the gravel-walks, the memorials of the dead, and above a clear blue sky—oh, how exquisite is it there to muse on man's hopes and man's faith!—and the villagers may often repair hither, and seek to recal those they once loved, and the whole array of the past may unfold itself before them, and then may come the dying chamber and the dying bed, the last whisper of tenderness, the fading eye, the feebler grasp, the serene departure, the silence of the king of terrors, and all around will be in accordance with their feelings and desires, and there will be anticipations winging themselves to the region of the blessed and the region of the happy.

Now we cannot conceive a better employment than the beautifying such a place; it is intimately connected

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with all that man holds dear, and it is interwoven with all his aspirations after a purer and a better world.

There are one or two customs, however, of our forefathers, which we should love to see revived: they may be simple, but this very simplicity is their charm; they seem the breathing of a rural population, and the expression of a rustic people; they seem heart-services, warm with the spirit's gratitude.

The decorating the graves with flowers, and the strewing of their fair blossoms in the path of the bride, we pass by, not because they are without grace, but because our limits will not allow us to add much more to this part of our paper; but there is another, and we conceive a fairer custom, which, if carried out, might be useful in building up the soul in her intercourse with the Creator; and that is, the offering of the hawthorn, and violet, and daisy as the first fruits of the year. The rite is truly a hallowed one; it is an act of acknowledgment—a token of our connexion with the Eternal; it is the homage of a grateful bosom—the hymn of a thankful heart; it speaks of the welcome and joy of a people—the goodness and care of a God; and how lovely a temple thus decked with beauty, and thus perfumed with sweetness, and worshippers thus rendering their anthem for a Father's untiring love and a Father's unwearying blessing!—what a freshness would the sanctuary breathe!—what purity!—what peace!

The adorning our churches with evergreens at Christmas is too well conformed with, to need any comments here; and surely these things are not too insignificant to be woven into the heaven-spun woof of our religion: they will tend to refine the mind, they will soothe and soften the heart, and prepare it for the reception of



those solemn and immortal truths which are symbolized by these customs; and if the love of Jesus is known and felt, there will be a richer and deeper beauty in the flowers, and the earth, and sky.

The children of the villagers are under the immediate care of the pastor; and we deem the custom of Legh Richmond, of taking them at times into the church-yard, and there giving his scriptural instruction, as beautiful as it was soul-elevating. The place is well calculated to yield the finest impressions; and how exquisite such a scene!—the shepherd of Christ, surrounded by his flock, and telling them of holiest things is a lovely sight anywhere, but how much lovelier when amid the placid stillness of the past, and the scent of violets and roses, and the fretted heavens above! The man of God, the little ones, the grassy graves, the light green turf, the sun-cinctured flowers, the dark yews, the soft, balmy air, the cooling breeze, the old ivied church, combine to form a scene of tranquil sweetness which must steal and wind itself for ever around the heart.

And we believe that those hallowed and divine truths which throw their summer-radiance over our beautiful creation, and thrilling associations, and calm memories, would glow with a more than ever brightening loveliness here, amid the stillness and the hush of nature; and what illustrations in every bush, and tree, and cloud, and grave—in sunshine and in shade—in the deep quietude of heaven's blue, and in the gentle breathing of its wind!

There is one other thing we would notice, and that is, the formation of a small library for each cottage; some ten or a dozen volumes would do: such would,

we believe, be far more beneficial than were the whole gathered into one large public mass; this may do very well in towns and cities, but where there are few houses, it is better for each to have an allotted share, from some funds which might, without very great difficulty, be raised;—a book is always read with a sweeter feeling of pleasure and profit when it is our own. Let the works be well chosen, and they would not fail, under God's blessing, of producing favourable results, and in spreading a more delightful loveliness over the fairest hamlet.

The love for the beautiful and true is of higher value than we imagine; it is nought save the aspiration after man's purest image and the world's loveliest condition; and it is the loss of this regard which renders humanity so low and earth-born; and therefore any approach to this ever-blessed state and the encouragement of this ever-divine principle, is the loftiest exercise of the soul and the sublimest play of the spirit.

James Hurdis, a name now nearly passed into oblivion, though deserving a much better fate, was the friend and admirer of Cowper. In his poems, there is enough to be found, though ill-conceived and carelessly executed, to give him a place among these papers; indeed, many of his lines we should feel sorry to see blotted from the book of remembrance; they grace and adorn the beautiful of home and creation. He has none of the everlasting energy of the higher bard; the divinity of poetry stirred not his bosom with its irresistible power, as it stirred the breast of our own Milton; his imagination revelled not in such imperial scenes—his heart glowed not with the eternal burning of inextinguishable thought; but the gentle breathing of the lyre

was his; he touched its chords of heavenly softness; he was master of much delicious sweetness; the mild sighing of the evening zephyrs and the ripple of the brook he loved, rather than the bellows of the midnight storm, and the boiling, and surging, and lashing of ocean.

In his most popular production, the "Village Curate," he has with much beauty described the life of a country clergyman, and although it is wanting in the vigour and enthusiasm which constitute the great poet, still there is much to recommend it to our notice.

About his poetry there is more of beauty than grandeur—more of gentle music than the glorious outbreak of all divinest harmonies. His sketches are of green fields, and wild flowers, and April showers, and nuttings, and clear rills, and grassy dells, and soft, sweet twilights, and golden sunsets; with the great, ponderous, gigantic eternity, he has nothing to do; he is satisfied with the loveliness of this lower creation; he enters not into that vast, immense, infinite expanse of being which stretches everywhere around us; he is not a "prophet poet," but a "poetic artist;" he is no seeker into the divine; his attachment to nature is a friendship, not a passion; its deep, magnificent, massive, inextinguishable, ever-rolling, ever-pealing music he heard not; he caught only the delicious melodies of woods, and streams, and birds; we are pleased, but not spell-bound; he would not have understood Schiller's expression—"Keep true to the dream of thy youth."

There is a degree of chaste beauty about this:—

In yonder mansion, reared by rustic hands,  
And decked with no superfluous ornament,  
Where use was all the architect proposed,  
And all the master wished, which, scarce a mile

From village tumult, to the morning sun  
Turns its warm aspect, yet with blossoms hung  
Of cherry and of peach, lives happy still  
The reverend Alcanor. On a hill,  
Half-way between the summit and a brook  
Which idly wanders at its foot, it stands,  
And looks into a valley wood-besprent,  
That winds along below. Beyond the brook,  
Where the high coppice intercepts it not,  
Or social elms, or with his ample waist  
The venerable oak, up the steep side  
Of yon aspiring hill full opposite,  
Luxuriant pasture spreads before his eye  
Eternal verdure; save that here and there  
A spot of deeper green shows where the swain  
Expects a nobler harvest, or high poles  
Mark the retreat of the scarce budded hop,  
Hereafter to be eminently fair,  
And hide the naked staff that trained him up  
With golden flowers. On the hill-top behold  
The village steeple, rising from the midst  
Of many a rustic edifice; 'tis all  
The pastor's care.

Nature boasts not a sweeter scene than a quiet hamlet; there is a calmness and a quietude about it which subdue the throbbing desires and the angry passions of the soul; gaze on it at noon-day—the sun is in the zenith; the heavens are expansive as immensity; a few light clouds float in the summer radiance; every valley is lighted up; the cottages, the parsonage, the church, the long plantation, the different clumps of trees, the silver waters, the mill, the boy fishing at the brook, the bridge, the dusty road winding up the hill, the silence—all influence the feelings; a repose, soft and dreamlike, overhangs the picture; the birds have retired to the shade, the leaves stir not, the breeze has passed away; there is a profound serenity.

Hurdis felt, with all the thrilling emotions of a poet,

the tinklings of the beautiful village-bells; and who can listen without thinking of the future and the past:—thoughts of the other world cross us; they come with the deep rush of glorious sounds; the eternal essence of poetry deepens within us; the music of immortality rolls on the ear; but soon it mingles with the pensive melody of bygone hours; then come the sunny, rapturous hours of childhood; heaven's bright radiance is on them; once again we act the scenes of life.

Years roll on: we have become a member of the university; we move among a new order of beings. Those days look beautiful in the remembrance; we feel shackled by the appointed studies; we long to breathe once more the free winds of heaven. Perhaps we are engaged in the dark lecture-room, and the sun beams in at the ancient window; it tells us of green grassy fields, and high hill-tops, and long shady woods, and straggling lanes, and mossy banks, and blossoming orchards, and bee-hives, and old ivied trees, and ancient halls, and tapering spires, and village-bells, and deep-deep tarns, and the blue-bell, and heather, and myrtle, and clear waters, and we long to behold them all again. Every spare moment is given to poetry and divine philosophy; their mighty and tremendous music enters the soul; the marvellous song deepens; scenes of ideal loveliness paint themselves on the visual organs; the heart burns with inextinguishable thought; we become etherealized; we live in another and fairer world; our spirit is big with the brightness and the glory of the future existence. And—the silver bells have ceased, and we wake again to every-day life:—

Long let us stray,  
 And ever, as we come to the shorn mead,  
 And quit the garden with reluctance, then,  
 When we behold the smiling valley spread  
 In gay luxuriance far before us, sheep  
 And oxen grazing, till the eye is stayed,  
 The sinuous prospect turning from the view,  
 And all above us, to the left and right,  
 Enchanting woodland to the topmost hill;  
 Then let the village bells, as often wont,  
 Come swelling on the breeze, and to the sun,  
 Half-set, sing merrily their evening song.  
 I ask not for the cause—it matters not;  
 It is enough for me to hear the sound  
 Of the remote exhilarating peal,  
 Now dying all away, now faintly heard,  
 And now, with loud and musical relapse,  
 Its mellow changes huddling on the ear.  
 So have I stood at eve on Isis' banks,  
 To hear the merry Christchurch bells rejoice;  
 So have I sat, too, in thy honoured shades,  
 Distinguished Magdalen, on Cherwell's banks,  
 To hear thy silver Wolsey tones so sweet.  
 And so, too, have I paused, and held my oar,  
 And suffered the slow stream to bear me home,  
 While Wykeham's peal along the meadow ran.

The lines on "May" are worth preserving:—

How charming 'tis to see sweet May  
 Laugh in the rear of winter, and put on  
 Her gay apparel, to begin anew  
 The wanton year. See where apace she comes,  
 As fair, as young, as brisk, as when from heaven,  
 Before the founder of the world, she tripped  
 To Paradise rejoicing: the high breeze  
 Wafts to the sense a thousand odours: hark!  
 The cheerful music which attends.

A charming description of May! and how fresh and beautiful is this month! It is arrayed with the delicious hawthorn, and all lovely flowers, and enlivened with the music of a million happy creatures, who warble their notes in the sunshine. The smile of the king

seems imaged in its cerulean sky, its green, transparent earth, and its running waters. Nature is adorned with pristine innocence. The heath, with its golden furze; the hedges, with their white elders and wild honeysuckles; the fields, with their cowslips, and primroses, and violets; the river banks, with their blue forget-me-nots; the gardens, with their lilacs, and laburnums, and acacias; the orchards, with their apple and plum blossoms; and the shrubberies, with their myrtles, and laurels, and lignums, beam with beauty. There is a revelry of earth and sky.

How nearly allied is May with all that we experienced in youth! How thrilling were those moments when the heart first awoke to the enchanting glories of creation! the earth seemed some divine abode, some spirit-dwelling realm. We thought not of sorrow; love alone reigned; it threw over all things an infinite meaning, an everlasting expression; the very air teemed with richest odours; the winds, the rolling, crashing thunders, the cataract, the heaving, swelling, dashing ocean, seemed fraught with majestic, imperishable, deep-toned harmonies. The world, with its thousand happy homes, broke in upon the soul as a dream; and as May came and went, a heaven of felicity pervaded all the soul.

But, as summer wore on, our emotions became more spiritual, more ethereal, and the paintings of the fancy bore a deeper colouring. How sweet, on a quiet evening, to saunter along the fine walks of an old garden, thinking of the past, the present, and the future; there is a melting of the heart; a soothing of the soul; materialism becomes vital, subtle; the melancholy music

of other years rolls on the ear; forgotten faces re-appear:—

In such a silent, cool, and wholesome hour,  
 The Author of the world from heaven came  
 To walk in Paradise, well pleased to mark  
 The harmless deeds of new-created man.  
 And sure the silent, cool, and wholesome hour  
 May still delight him, our atonement made.  
 Who knows, but as we walk, he walks unseen,  
 And sees and well approves the cheerful task  
 The fair one loves. He breathes upon the pink,  
 And gives it odour; touches the sweet rose,  
 And makes it glow; beckons the evening dew,  
 And sheds it on the lupin and the pea:  
 Then smiles on her, and beautifies her cheek  
 With gay good humour, happiness, and health.  
 So all are passing sweet, and the young Eve  
 Feels all her pains rewarded, all her joys  
 Perfect and unimpaired.

Hurdis has one fine passage on the storm; its last few lines are exceedingly pleasing. The allusion to the family meeting in the morning after the midnight tempest, and their telling how fiercely flashed the lightnings, and how loudly the thunders rolled, and how furiously the winds blew, and how the driving rain dashed against the window panes, is beyond expression beautiful.

Let me sit to see the lowering storm  
 Collect its dusky horrors, and advance  
 To bellow sternly in the ear of night;  
 To see the Almighty Electrician come,  
 Making the clouds his chariot. Who can stand  
 When he appears? The conscious creature flies,  
 And skulks away, afraid to see his God  
 Charge and re-charge his dreadful battery.  
 For who so pure his lightning might not blast,  
 And be the messenger of justice? Who  
 Can stand exposed, and to his Judge exclaim,  
 "My heart is cleansed, turn thy storm away?"  
 Fear not, ye fair, who with the naughty world



Have seldom mingled. Mark the rolling storm,  
 And let me hear you tell, when morning comes  
 With what tremendous howl the furious blast  
 Blew the large shower in heavy cataract  
 Against your window; how the keen, the quick,  
 And vivid lightning quivered on your bed,  
 And how the deep artillery of heaven  
 Broke loose, and shook your coward habitation.

The drying up of the storm is vividly depicted in the following lines; the scene is rendered almost visible; we see the clear, blue sky, the sunny radiance, the rain-drops hanging on the branches, the leaves shaken by the fresh breeze; we almost feel the purer existence:—

At length, the storm abates; the furious wind  
 No longer howls; the lightning faintly gleams,  
 And the retiring thunder scarce is heard;  
 The shower ceases, and the golden sun  
 Bursts from the cloud, and hangs the wood with pearls,  
 Fast falling to the ground; on the dark cloud  
 His watery ray impressed, in brilliant hues  
 Paints the gay rainbow—all is calm and clear;  
 The blackbird sings.

In 1792, our poet lost his favourite sister, Catherine; he felt that his family circle was broken into, and robbed of its sweetest member. This preyed deeply on his sensitive and affectionate heart; he felt the trial keenly. "She was a gem," so he writes to Cowper, "which had hung around my neck all the days of my life, and never lost its lustre." This dear and much-loved girl is the Margaret and Isabel of his poetry. How forcible and eloquent does his grief burst forth; but it soon breathes a sweeter and calmer note; he becomes more resigned; his lips speak a holier language; his sorrow is serene and gentle; no throbbing outbreak now; all quiet and all still:—

Yes, I was happier once, and fondly sung  
 Of comforts not dissembled of my cot,  
 And sweet amusements which attract no more.  
 Methought my song should ever be content,  
 Placed by my God where I was richly blessed,  
 In such a nook of life, that I nor wished  
 Nor fancied aught could have pleased me more.  
 So sings the summer linnet on the bough ;  
 And, pleased with the warm sun-beam, half asleep,  
 The feeble sonnet of supine content  
 To his Creator warbles ; warbles sweet,  
 And not condemned, till some unfeeling boy  
 His piece unheeded levels, and with shower  
 Of leaden mischief his ill uttered song  
 Suddenly closes ; pines the songster then,  
 Wounded and scared, flutters from bough to bough,  
 Complains and dies, or lingers life away  
 In silent anguish, and is heard no more.

My God, have I arraigned thee ? Let thy bow  
 Ten thousand arrows in this bosom fix,  
 Yet will I own thee just ; take all away,  
 Leave me no friend, but let me weep alone  
 At mute affliction's solitary board :  
 Summon Cecilia to an early grave,  
 And let her tribe of cheerful graces fade,  
 Fast as the flower she gathers ; let the worm  
 Prey on the roses of Eliza's cheek,  
 Yet will I bless thee ; for to this harsh world  
 I came a beggar, but sufficient bread  
 Have never needed ; thy indulgent hand  
 Fed and sustained me, and sustains me still ;  
 Nor feel I hardship which thy partial rod  
 To me alone dispenses ; bitter loss,  
 Sorrow and misery, o'erflow the cup  
 Of many a soul more innocent than mine.

Thou bounteous Author of all human bliss,  
 Give me whatever lot thy wisdom deems  
 Meet and convenient—pleasure, if thou wilt—  
 If not, then pain—and be it sharp as this—  
 My heart, though wounded, shall adore thee still.

From these specimens, and numberless others which might easily be adduced, we think with Southey, that Hurdís ought to have a place in every collection of the British poets. He wrote in the cause of truth ; and his life furnished the best commentary on his works.

If his talents were not brilliant, they were far superior to many whose names are still mentioned with honour; but with this world he himself has done; his spirit has entered that vast and gigantic fabric where a thousand lyres breathe out their harmonies to the Invisible; there, exulting in the everlasting gush of song, and in the presence of unclouded Deity, he rolls out his anthem of all-delicious and purest sounds.

## CHRISTOPHER SMART.

"Oh, what a cry has gone up from thousands and ten thousands of souls! and this the burden of the cry—I desire to be one in the deep centre of my being, to be one, and not many; to be able to reduce my life to one law; to be able to explain it to myself in the master-light of one idea; to be no longer rent, torn, and distracted, as I am now. And whence shall this oneness come? Where shall we find, amid all the chances and changes of the world, this law of our life, this centre of our being, this key-note to which, setting our lives, their seeming discords shall appear as their deepest harmonies? Only in God, only in the Son of God, only in the faith, that what scripture makes the end and purpose of God's dealing with his race, is only the end and purpose of his dealing with each one of us—namely, that his Son should be manifested in us; that we, with all things which are in heaven, and all things which are in earth, may be gathered together in Christ, even in Him."—TRENCH.

GENIUS, it would seem, from past and present experience, is subject to manifold changes: to-day prosperous, to-morrow in adversity, appears to be the dower of great intellectual power. While moral worth triumphs over every sullen circumstance, and bends it to its own advantage, intellectual is the sport and prey of every passing breath; it has not in itself the might to quell each storm, and to disperse each tempest-cloud; nor can it endure for any length of time the bright radiant sunshine of favour, without suffering for it in the loss of strength and power.

Moral greatness renders exalted the man, and gives

him that whereby he is able to bend all things to his will; intellectual, raises, but gives no such talisman. Moral greatness ennobles the creature, assimilates him to the Supreme, places him in a region where the sky is never clouded, and the heavens never dark; intellectual, makes the spirit like some majestic vessel upon a tossing, surging ocean, without ballast, and without pilot.

Great intellect requires greater moral principle, and this has rarely been found in our gigantic men; subject to more than ordinary temptations, they necessarily need more than ordinary piety. What wonder, then, that so many have been guilty of excesses which sully their glorious names?

Christopher Smart does not, in any degree, lessen the truth of these remarks; his history tends rather to confirm them: he was born at Shipbourne, in Kent, on the 11th of April, 1722; during his boyhood, his father died, but, through the kind assistance of some influential friends, he was entered at Pembroke College, Cambridge: ah, how often do we think of his perturbed and broken spirit when pacing its venerable courts. In his twenty-third year he obtained a fellowship, and soon afterwards became a candidate for the Seatonian prize, in which he was five times successful.

The poems thus produced would not have bestowed immortality on Smart; though there are a few striking lines, yet, upon the whole, they are anything but true poetry.

It is a strange circumstance, that all the productions of this class, with but one or two exceptions, are dull and lifeless things. It is of no use to make as an objection the youth of the parties: White, and Rogers,

and Campbell, and John Keats, published their immortal poems before the age of twenty-three. It would require no little thought to go deeply into the cause of this. A few apparent reasons we may, however, mention, as likely to operate powerfully against these academical honours. First—the subject is given: now genius naturally likes to choose its own theme; it is its lawful and solemn birthright; it hates to be shackled; it cannot be chained; you dare not fetter it; it abhors the swaddling bands of others; it rends them asunder; “God, the purely free,” as Richter has nobly said, “educates only the free; the devil, purely servile, educates only his like;” bondage is terrible; a prison is awful; it breaks up the fountain of song; it runs away in broken streams; there is no mighty and tremendous outpouring; it brings the mildew of heaviness upon the spirit; it overloads the heart; its pulsations are stayed; its throbbings cease; and hence few men of after celebrity ever composed for a college or university prize with success; generally, such men are too wise to attempt it; they would not succeed if they did. True, Cowper wrote his Task at the wish of a lady, but he soon escapes the given subject, and runs along the country-lane to pick once more the haws and hips, and look upwards into the face of heaven; the distinction may be sweet, and sweet the smile of vice-chancellor and learned fellows, but not so sweet, not so delicious, as unbounded and unshackled freedom!

Man is the child of revelation; revelations have not ceased; to the true soul they come ever and anon; the influx of the Deity is perceived; the spirit is radiated with glory; illumined with a light brighter than the orb of day;

when truth is perceived, then is the revealing hour. It is when we cast away our love of self, and our pride, and our prejudices, that revelations circulate through the mind as freely as moonbeams along the meadows on a cloudless night. And as man is revelation's child, so is he the child of inspiration; at seasons he is all soul, "all eyeball." Then, and then only, can he write to please himself; we cannot write when we choose, if we would write to satisfy our after-judgment: it is impossible: Dr. Johnson said an author could compose at any time; what sort of author? ask Milton, ask Petrarch, ask Goëthe, and they shall tell you. The divine openings, the divine breathings come not ever to the mind. They break in suddenly, momentarily: ethereal sunlight, ethereal music, ethereal thought, ethereal language, these are not ever beside one. They tarry not long: sensual pleasures arise, and cover the hemisphere, and shut out all glorious sights and sounds, and we sink once again into the ordinary man.

And as we thus judge, so do we find it true; inspiration is not continually with us; the subtle witcheries of song cannot constantly be trilled out; the harp cannot, but at certain times, be swept by the frenzied hand of the immortal. The stream will not run for ever, if the fountain be sealed; the mighty spirit may be within, but it is oftentimes hidden; and of all things, college prizes are the least likely to awaken this tremendous enthusiasm, enkindle this prophetic burning, draw forth this deep gush of melody.

The voice of fame may be sweet, but not academical fame; worthless thing, away! it is the exalted distinction of enchanting the world, of binding millions to its eloquent oratory; of moving the gigantic masses of the

ages to come; of standing aloft in towering majesty for ever among the great ones of this earth; of breathing delicious music into the soul of him who has a heart to feel and an ear to listen. To this, what are academical honours: how poor, how meagre! No: the world is the theatre on which to develop the workings of a vast and sublime genius. The university is too narrow, too confining, too much like the dungeon; the great enthusiastic spirit disdains all limits. See yonder throne, ah, no! it is far off in the stretch of infinitude, and the wondrous expanse of immensity: it is bounded alone by that: a glorious, everlasting boundary! What has it to do with limits—reach, reach onwards to the Eternal!

Not that we wish the overthrow of all college-honours; far from that; but who meets with a prize poem or a prize essay—and there have been thousands published—in some lone country inn, as a great man once found Thomson's immortal self-set hymn? what have such things to do with the unquenchable spirit, and as free as unquenchable, of the bard? he is beyond them all! He has fixed his glance, his gaze, upon a higher, loftier, and holier object than mere college triumphs; he can afford to lose some paltry, temporary fame, for the praise of a world; he sacrifices present gratification; is content to be a poll-man, so that he may secure to himself an imperishable existence; did a senior wrangler or a senior classic enchain the listening earth with their eloquence, then would it be worth the trial; every energy would be put forth; every power urged; every faculty used, until the distinction had been won—the wreath around the brows.

In 1753, Smart resigned his fellowship, and married Miss Carnan. From that time his former imprudence



became more striking; but what can we say when insanity was already in the brain? His is a strange story of poverty, disease, unhappiness. We desire not to enter into details; over sorrow we would ever draw the veil. He, indeed, seemed to have some saner moments, but are we quite sure that even in these, there was no lurking delirium—no concealed madness?

Smart's most remarkable production is his "Song to David." Part of it was indented, by a key, upon the walls of his prison, where he was confined for debt. It has some tame passages, but as a whole, it is a great and sublime hymn; some few of its stanzas are inimitable; it has no parallel in the language. A grandeur and a splendour characterize this magnificent production. Smart mostly wrote upon his knees—a proof of the poet's dependence on the Eternal. The inspiration of the Most High is in this powerful inscription of praise. The darkness of his circumstances overclouded not even his spirit: at seasons it could vent itself in strains of exquisite beauty and impetuous eloquence.

There is much about his tale that binds all our sympathies to the man. The gloom of his soul—the confusion of his affairs—his insanity—his fervent piety—all link our feelings to the bard: and then, when brought to the lowest degree of misery and degradation, do we behold him towering upwards in the greatness of his intellectual might and hallowed principles of his soul, uttering, as he ascends, the vehement Song to David. When the sunshine of prosperity beamed upon him, when sorrow and despair were unthought of, when his dreams were young and ardent, when his fancy revelled in scenes of quiet happiness, his muse

was sickly and weak: but when darkness came, and ruin, and desertion of friends, and clouded intellect, and burning madness, then did he uplift himself in "the greatness of his strength," and sweep the strings of an immortal lyre. When he stood in the gay hour of youth, "with his blushing honours thick upon him," his writing wore not the garb of immortality; but when pale sickness came, and dark aberration, and anxious care, then he arose, like the eagle in its mightiest glory, and gazed on the sun in the clear noon-day firmament, awaking his deepest, and sweetest, and holiest music.

To account for this we may ever be unable. Perhaps, however, his sorrows and trials opened up a clearer view of the sublime attributes of the Everlasting; and thus enkindled the enthusiasm, deepened the love, exalted the intellect of the poet. A just knowledge of the Invisible—the belief in a spiritual and divine influence—the faith that God giveth to those who ask it of him—might have led Smart to the footstool of the Throne where the glory and resplendent beauty of the Deity would ever meet his gaze. Nothing tends so much to raise and dignify song as communion with the Unseen. Dependence here is strength; weakness, might; broken sounds, sweetest melody. Thus, our massive Milton rose, and rolled out vast harmonies of tremendous grandeur; and our own Cowper breathed such holy hymns, more delicious than, even in the ancient world, issued from harp or lute.

But to the poet: speaking of the melodious harper, he says:—

His muse, bright angel of his verse,  
Gives balm for all the thorns that pierce,  
For all the pangs that rage:

Blest light still gaining on the gloom,  
The more than Michael of his bloom,  
The Abishag of his age.

He sang of God, the mighty source  
Of all things, the stupendous force,  
On which all strength depends;  
From whose right arm, beneath whose eyes,  
All period, power, and enterprise  
Commences, reigns, and ends.

In the paraphrase of God's command to Moses, what beauty is not perceptible:—

Tell them "I AM," Jehovah said  
To Moses: while earth heard in dread,  
And, smitten to the heart,  
At once above, beneath, around,  
All nature, without voice or sound,  
Replied—"O Lord, Thou art."

"All thy works praise thee, O Lord," is the expression of the sweet singer of Israel. With what grace has not our bard followed out the idea in these lines:—

For adoration, incense comes  
From bezoar and Arabian gums,  
And from the civet's fur:  
But as for prayer, or e'er it faints,  
Far better is the breath of saints  
Than galbanum or myrrh.

For adoration, all the paths  
Of grace are open, all the baths  
Of purity refresh;  
And all the rays of glory beam  
To deck the man of God's esteem,  
Who triumphs o'er the flesh.

But the conclusion of the hymn is in a still finer and richer tone. What exquisite pauses, and then what vehement eloquence, swelling into grandeur:—

Sweet is the dew that falls betimes,  
And drops upon the leafy limes;  
Sweet Hermon's fragrant air:

Sweet is the lily's silver bell,  
And sweet the wakeful taper's smell,  
That watch for early prayer.

Sweet the young nurse, with love intense,  
Which smiles o'er sleeping innocence;  
Sweet when the lost arrive:  
Sweet the musician's ardour beats,  
While his vague mind's in quest of sweets,  
The choicest flowers to hive.

Sweeter, in all the strains of love,  
The language of thy turtle-dove,  
Paired to thy swelling chord;  
Sweeter, with every grace endued,  
The glory of thy gratitude,  
Respired unto the Lord.

Strong is the horse upon his speed;  
Strong in pursuit the rapid glade,  
Which makes at once his game:  
Strong the tall ostrich on the ground;  
Strong through the turbulence profound  
Shoots xiphias to his aim.

Strong is the lion—like a coal  
His eyeball—like a bastion's mole  
His chest against the foes:  
Strong the gier-eagle on his sail,  
Strong against tide the enormous whale  
Emerges as he goes.

But stronger still in earth and air,  
And in the sea, the man of prayer,  
And far beneath the tide:  
And in the seat to faith assigned,  
Where ask is have, where seek is find,  
Where knock is open wide.

Beauteous the fleet before the gale;  
Beauteous the multitudes in mail,  
Ranked arms, and crested heads;  
Beauteous the garden's umbrage mild,  
Walk, water, meditated wild,  
And all the blooming beds.

Beauteous the moon full on the lawn;  
And beauteous when the veil's withdrawn,  
The virgin to her spouse:  
Beauteous the temple, decked and filled,  
When to the heaven of heavens they build  
Their heart-directed vows.

Beauteous, yea, beauteous more than these,  
The shepherd king upon his knees,  
For his momentous trust;  
With wish of infinite conceit,  
For man, beast, mute, the small and great,  
And prostrate dust to dust.

Glorious the sun in mid career;  
Glorious the assembled fires appear;  
Glorious the comet's train;  
Glorious the trumpet and alarm;  
Glorious the Almighty's stretched-out arm;  
Glorious the enraptured main:

Glorious the northern lights astream;  
Glorious the song, when God's the theme;  
Glorious the thunder's roar:  
Glorious hosannah from the den:  
Glorious the Catholic Amen;  
Glorious the martyr's gore:

Glorious, more glorious is the crown  
Of Him that brought salvation down,  
By meekness called thy Son;  
Thou that stupendous truth believed,  
And now the matchless deed's achieved,  
Determined, dared, and done!

## WOODROOFFE, WALKER, GILFILLAN,

ETC.

“The world is full of poetry—the air  
Is living with its spirit; and the waves  
Dance to the music of its melodies,  
And sparkle in its brightness. Earth is veiled  
And mantled with its beauty; and the walls  
That close the universe with crystal in,  
Are eloquent with voices, that proclaim  
The unseen glories of immensity,  
In harmonies too perfect and too high  
For aught but beings of celestial mould,  
And speak to man in one eternal hymn,  
Unfading beauty, and unyielding power.”—PERCIVAL.

TIME sweepeth by, and we must close our volume; but we cannot do so ere we express our feelings and thoughts in regard to some other deeply cherished spirits. We had intended giving a lengthened criticism on each, but opportunity has fled, and we have now to prepare for colder studies; but this little we must and will say.

Sophia Woodrooffe:—The poems of this youthful author exhibit much exquisite beauty, elegance, and taste; there is something of Gray's manner and style about them; there is the classic music of Collins; but they sing a lighter song—more truly Grecian—more like the sunny sky of Athens—breathe a more

liquid melody; they are warmer, have more of the heart, are imbued with more of the life-blood of humanity; they are not so cold, nor so like the chilly portico of a marble temple; there is more vigour, more energy, more brilliant fire; many of them are superior to Mason, though tintured at times with his stiff colouring.

Her imagination is decidedly Grecian: loveliness is the characteristic. We catch, at times, a deeper tone of voluptuousness, as if breathing of Araby; there is a slight tinge of Orientalism; but Greece, Greece is the idol of her soul, the star ever sparkling in her horizon, the fire-flame ever flaring upward to the wide heavens—Greece, Greece, ancient, glorious Greece!

The Origin of Painting, Delos, and the Athenian Torch-race, are among the most exquisite of her productions. We know not which to admire most—the beauty of the thoughts, or the sweetness of the melody. Of her translations from the Italian and German, those from Metastasio and Goëthe are perhaps the finest. The Hymn of Cleantes is magnificent, and rises at times to the sublime.

How different is Bradshawe Walker—how opposite his love! What liquid warblings, and how redolent of the flowers of his own sunny isle! We love his thoroughly pastoral songs; they breathe of meadows, and corn-fields, and new-made hay; what memories they awaken, sweet-toned, of olden times; and how pleasant his love of nature; he is all heart, all soul; there is no enchain-ing the feelings, no coldness, no icy sternness; he is like some quiet pellucid brook meandering through some fine English park and by some ancient village

church, while all around is still and quiet. Blessings on thee, poet! for thy strains of peace and happiness and radiant beauty.

But grandeur as of Creation's glory; how shall we speak of Gilfillan, with his magnificent images and thoughts? He is like his own land, with its gorgeous sunsets amid the wide-stretching and heaven-towering mountains: like the splendour of his own lochs shadowing in their deep waters the sublime scenery of the midnight sky: he is like the earth with her rolling oceans, and beauteous isles, and huge continents, and dark forests. He is part of the great universe; the spirit-breathing hymn of heaven; the glorious and divine song throwing tenfold beauty, and shedding tenfold lustre on the vast creation: well may he be one of Scotia's mightiest sons!

How silvery are Moultrie's tones; how he enchanted us with his "Dream of Life;" we had just entered the University when we heard the peaceful notes; it was a change from discord to lute-like melody: how we listened to the mellow sounds; and Time has not lessened our regard. It is one of the sweetest of strains—like the wood-pigeon—like the nightingale—like "every daughter of heavenly song." It has the delicious cadence of an evening hymn—it is all beauty, all loveliness: it is like a mild, radiant day—all golden sunshine—all softened glory. One floats amid its still, quiet music: how tender and melting its voice of home and bygone memories! ever does it soothe and purify the heart.



Tennyson: so classical, so full of refined beauty, breathing all the spirit of loveliness. How exquisite his "Cenone"—"Dear mother Ida, hearken, ere I die!" How the plaintive language breaks on the air in delicious accents: we think we see the gentle Cenone and the three fair deities of Olympus, with the sunbeam darting through the vine-leaves and the olive upon their "finely-chiselled" forms, so moulded to perfect symmetry. She recalls all the tenderness of her lover: "Dear mother Ida, hearken, ere I die." The sylvan shades, and the clear streams, and the grassy meads, and the flowery banks, and the modest violet, and the golden crocus seem to echo in softest whispers to the melancholy prayer—"Dear mother Ida, hearken, ere I die!" And the rippling of the waters, and the light blue of heaven, and the fleecy clouds, and the rich perfumes of rose and hyacinths re-echo in tones of deep, still witchery, "Dear mother Ida, hearken, ere I die!" The dulcet cadence floats over the dark wave of ocean, and faithful Cenone, with her clustering hair and serene countenance lifts her dewy eye to the broad canopy of midnoon, and once again throbs out, "Dear mother Ida, hearken, ere I die!"

The literature of the church is as glorious as her purest doctrines. What sounds "of joyance and of hope" have swelled onwards from the first moment Jesus preached in Judea. What names stand out in massive grandeur as years roll by: bright starlight beaming on the troublous chaos of this lower world. And among these, John Stevenson is not the least. We know of no holier book, no chaster work, no sweeter hymn; it is one of the masterpieces of the age,

the immortal strain of the church, even this "Christ on the Cross." It is the purest and most hallowed song of these later times; it is destined to live, destined to breathe itself through centuries: you cannot hearken to it without feeling it to be an imperishable harmony to the spirit of truth. Its language is the language of a mighty one; its thoughts are the thoughts of an undying soul: all is masterly; every page, every line is imbued with gracefulness; it sparkles with unfading radiance; it rolls forth the music of eternity; it stamps greatness on the name of its author; that name will become venerable, will be as a beacon standing almost lonely amid the dreariness of the present days; how sweetly will its light beam on the future inquirer, and lead him onwards to the land where all is fair, and beautiful, and good.

THE END.



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